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LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE.

AUGUST 1904.

The Tiger of Muscovy.

BY FRED WHISHAW.

CHAPTER VII.

AMY'S decision was, it may be believed, a withering blow to my happiness. What meant she by it? Was it an outbreak of the devilry that was for ever riot in her nature; a desire to see the world; an evidence that she wearied of her eventless life at the Court of Elizabeth?

That she desired or intended to marry this Muscovish king I never for a moment contemplated.

But at any rate I had been left out of the reckoning, and any lingering hope or half belief that my existence was of any moment to her I was obliged now to abandon. Truly I was nothing to her, and less than nothing.

I rallied her that very afternoon upon her decision.

'Anyone might see that her Grace was in a quandary,' she replied. 'She had promised this Muscovy Cæsar a bride who should be her kinswoman, and Mary Hastings failed her. She was vexed, for she had promised and would not go back upon her word. Therefore I, who do not fear Cæsar or devil, will take Mary's place; are you answered?'

'Oh, there is more behind than that!' I said fiercely, for I was angry and knew not yet what I should do for very misery to think of losing her.

'Explain,' she said, 'for if you know it, you are wiser than I.'

'Ambition, maybe,' I said; 'God knows what; how should I know your mind? Do you know it yourself?'

Amy laughed. 'If a ship can carry me to Muscovy a ship can carry me back,' she said; 'that is what I think. First I will see whether it will suit me to be a Queen, or Cæsaresse, or what-not; if the prospect pleases me not, I shall return with the Queen's envoy.'

'Muscovy is not England; here you may come and go, as you will; there you may come, but as for the going that will be the will of the Cæsar.'

'Bah!' she said, 'I knew you would counsel thus, Mr. Shadow-fearer.'

'I fear no shadows,' I replied hotly, 'and well you know it. I fear that which is real danger, and that not for myself but for thee. If I went with thee, it would be different.'

'Oh, we shall need several attendants,' she said, mockingly; 'the envoy will require body-servants, perhaps a cook—what are thy qualifications?'

I replied angrily:

'To see that little blind fools of maids, who know nothing and therefore fear nothing, run not their heads into the noose; such maids as have too early left their mother's apron-strings, who know not their best friends, who——'

'Oh, for pity cease thy clacking,' she laughed. 'I command thee to stay behind—is that plain? I will not be shamed by thy long face that all Muscovy will laugh at, as all London does, and the goose-look thou now wearest. Stay at home, I say; I have no need of a nurse.'

'Whether I go or stay depends not at all upon thy will, but on my own,' I snapped out, and so disappeared from her presence.

But by this time I was fully determined that she should not go without me for protector. My trouble was to obtain permission of her Grace, which permission might or might not be accorded, as the Queen's whim of the moment ordained.

I put the matter to the test at the first available moment. This was no easy matter, for I had scarcely spoken a dozen words to the Queen, and though receiving constant evidence of her favour in looks and smiles, I was frightened and awed when it came to speaking, being bitterly conscious that I made a fool of myself and that Amy watched and blushed for me. Standing on guard at the door of an ante-room, I dared to step forward and

address her Grace as she passed into the Cabinet. I proffered my request, stammering, speaking so thickly that her Grace understood not what I would say.

'Good Lord! what ails the man?' she said; 'speak up, what of Amy Romalyn?'

'She is my cousin,' I faltered; 'I am concerned that she should visit Muscovy without special protection; her mother——'

'What, and thou wouldst go with her as nurse?' the Queen laughed, though she looked annoyed as well. 'That shall be as Amy decides; speak, Amy, wilt thou have this long-legged nurse to wipe thy eyes if the Cæsar slap thee?'

'God forbid!' said Amy, red as a peony; 'I need him not. If there be need to baa to the Cæsar, I can baa for myself.'

'Thou art answered,' laughed her Grace, 'though Lord only knows what she means. At any rate, as it seems, thy service is not desired.' The Queen passed on with her companions, Amy avoiding my look.

I blushed and retired, more hurt than I cared to show, though no whit less determined to go with Amy, in spite of her unkindness.

That day the man Muirhead, he who was an officer of the Muscovy Cæsar, entered as I stood with others in our guard-room. I was angry and quarrelsome, and my companions were grouped at a distance from me, having found my temper at present intractable.

Muirhead asked which was he who had volunteered to journey with the envoy's party to Muscovy. I heard him, and flushed with shame, knowing that having heard of my petition he would also have heard of the reply of the Queen thereto, and of Amy's comment. But having been pointed out as the man concerned, I roused myself; rather quarrel than bear out the jest of Amy by looking sheepish.

'I am the man,' said I, stepping forward; 'and though my petition failed, think not I am thereby done with; if I desire to go, neither Queen nor devil shall prevent me.'

'Is it so?' said Muirhead gravely, looking me over. 'This lady who is rash enough to fill the place of Lady Mary Hastings in spite of my warnings, every word of which is true, this rash maiden is a kinswoman of yours?'

'That is so, and may account for her rudeness,' I said. 'We are in the habit of speaking as we please to one another, having played together as children; but——'

'That is a small matter,' he replied, interrupting. 'What is of vital importance is that she should be adequately watched and protected. Are you intent upon accompanying us? I warn you that your position, unless you enjoy the Queen's commission, would be full of danger; even under the *ægis* of her Grace, God knows whether you would escape Ivan's *dubina*.'

'What is that?' I asked, laughing, for somehow the way to my desired end seemed to clear with this man's words.

'The iron tipped and pointed staff which the Tsar for ever holds in his hands, to strike or impale withal all such as offend him. Be sure I have been threatened more times than one, and once slightly hurt. Do you observe that I limp a little when walking naturally, though in the presence I am able to pull myself together and drag my feet equally? I have lost one toe, my friend, for which I have to thank the *dubina* of my gracious master the Cæsar, as you all love to call him.'

'Good Lord!' I exclaimed. 'And what of his wife? Would she too be in danger of sudden attack?'

'My friend,' said Muirhead, 'in the presence of my great master, eye and tongue must be continually upon the watch, even of those whom he loves the best or who have served him longest and most faithfully.'

'By all the devils of hell!' I cried, pacing in fury hither and thither, 'she shall not go without me to the Court of this demoniac!'

'Good!' he said; 'if thou art so determined, the matter shall be arranged. Her Grace has chosen her envoy; it is Sir Jerome Bowes. I will bid Sir Jerome insist that he must have secretary or attendant, or call it what he please, under commission from her Grace, and for the post your name shall be submitted—Shadwell, I am told.'

'Herbert Shadwell,' said I; 'for God's sake say beforehand nothing of what you will do—she—there is one who will influence the Queen against my appointment; she is proud and independent and—and foolishly averse to the idea of being watched over and protected; yet I have promised her mother, who is—'

'I see, I see.' Muirhead seemed to repress a smile which trembled upon his lips. 'You are fulfilling a family obligation. Her mother should appreciate well your conduct, for before Heaven, young sir, you are undertaking a perilous charge. You do not flinch—I ask for the last time?'

'Sir,' I said in assumed anger, for in truth my heart beat

joyfully, and withal gratefully, in my bosom, 'I am seldom asked to repeat an assurance; what I have said may stand.'

'Nay, I meant no offence,' he said, shaking me by the hand; 'be sure that I am both surprised and delighted to have found one prepared to act in the capacity you have chosen for yourself.'

'See you get me the appointment,' I laughed, 'and forgiveness shall be easy!'

When Muirhead had departed and I ran over in my mind the words he had spoken, I rejoiced for more reasons than one. I should now accompany Amy, whether she professed to approve or no—that was of course the chief matter. Next, I laughed and rejoiced that Sir Jerome Bowes should have been appointed envoy. Truly her Majesty carried a wise and discriminating head upon her shoulders, unless, indeed, the appointment was made more by way of punishment than in honour, in order to rid herself for a while, and it might be for ever, of one of the few persons within her realm who dared to speak to her Grace without fear, without subterfuge, and without personal compliment or flattery such as her soul loved.

For this Sir Jerome was a Border knight of indomitable spirit, of rough, grim humour, of impregnable honesty and straightforwardness; ready of hand and of rapier, stout of heart to a fault; for the independence of bearing engendered by his undaunted honesty and courage lent to his manners an uncouthness which did not enhance the favour enjoyed by him in the presence of princes. More than once he had gravely offended her Grace by giving with crude simplicity and directness his opinion upon her own conduct. It was said that he had even spent a certain period within the Tower in consequence of one of these errors in good manners; but having, to her Grace's lasting honour, been quickly forgiven and restored, he promptly showed, by repeating the offence at the first opportunity, that in this respect he was past praying for.

It occurred to me now that, finding him incorrigible as a courtier, but recognising his merits, and especially his fitness for the present enterprise, she had in her wisdom at a stroke rid herself of an uncomfortable, though respected, individuality about the Court, and made an appointment for which could scarcely have been found a more suitable agent.

Indeed, the same could have been said of Sir Jerome if it should have been found necessary to despatch an envoy to the

infernal regions, in order to defy there Lucifer himself and all his angels ; for assuredly the sturdy knight would have accepted the mission with as much readiness as he displayed in undertaking the present embassy, having no room in his heart for any fear whatever, whether of Cæsars or of devils.

CHAPTER VIII.

Two days later, and a week before the sailing date of our good ship the *Bona Esperanza*, the Queen, with her company, paused a moment as she passed the door at which I stood upon guard. My heart sank as my foolish face flushed ; but seeing in an instant that Amy was not among the attendants of her Grace, I quickly recovered some of the spirit which had escaped at the first shock of the Queen's approach.

'So,' she said, frowning a little, 'thou art not satisfied with the Queen's service, and would quit it within a month of appointment. Thou must needs be nurse to thy cousin, whether she will have thee or no.'

'Madam,' I faltered, 'her mother has written that——'

'Oh, Lord !' her Grace laughed, 'the chit has left her mother's nest ; it is *I* that stand *in loco parentis*. Amy has assured me with tears that she needs no protector. Be sure you shall have many black looks.'

'Madam,' I said boldly, for her words indicated that my wish would be granted, even though unwillingly, 'the child does not always love the nurse who accompanies and protects her ; but how should she know wisdom ? Though she scream and kick, it is not the less necessary that she be watched, and saved from harm. When her anger is over, even a child may learn to be glad of a nurse.'

'Well, well,' laughed her Grace, 'I would not be in thy place. Even I have suffered black looks because of thee. This child will assuredly both scream and kick when she is in the humour. If she becomes the Cæsar's wife, I know not whether she will not declare war upon me. Upon thee she has declared it already. Thou shalt need all thy longness of leg for flight once she is Ivan's wife and carries like him an oaken staff. Run for thy life, man, when this happens ; take ship with Sir Jerome and return.'

Her Grace laughed aloud ; she was in a merry mood, and I thanked God for it.

‘ Then I may go, madam,’ I blurted, wreathing my foolish countenance, I suppose, in an expression of joy and relief.

‘ Mercy of Heaven, look at the man ! One might suppose he was in love with Cæsar’s wife ! Yes, go, fool ; go, if you will.’

Her Grace laughed, passed her eye once over my two yards and eight inches of Devonshire bone and muscle, frowned, and departed.

Thus it happened that when the *Bona Esperanza* cast her moorings and floated down river upon the ebb, I, Herbert Shadwell, found myself aboard in company with Sir Jeronie Bowes, in the capacity of Secretary of Embassy ; with Muirhead ; with the depressed-looking Muscovish envoy, whose name, let me here say, was Pitzemsky or Peesemsky, and his suite ; and, lastly, with Amy Romalyn and her woman ; and for the first few days we saw but little of one another, being prostrate, most of us, with the seasickness.

But within a week, the nausea conquered, passengers began to assemble once more upon deck, and now indeed I had my share of black looks, as her Majesty had forewarned me—ay, and of black words also.

Verily it would seem that in accompanying Amy upon her foolish journey into the little-known and certainly barbarous realms of this Tiger of Muscovy, into whose power she was determined to submit herself, I had performed towards her the basest and most unpardonable of deeds. It was in vain that I appealed to Muirhead for confirmation when I declared that she might find she would need a protector more than she now believed, for poor Muirhead gained nothing by his protestations that I spoke truth and had acted, indeed, partly upon his advice ; nothing, that is, save a share of those black looks and frowns which hitherto had been my own portion.

‘ Leave her alone awhile,’ he said, laughing, altogether undismayed. ‘ It may be that she conceals a feeling of grateful relief under this veneer of apparent displeasure. Who can understand the mysterious ways of a woman ?’

So, for awhile, I left her alone and devoted all the attention that I could spare to the learning of the Muscovish tongue, in which I proved a promising pupil—so at least Muirhead assured me, who, as my teacher, gave me praise. And behold ! Amy herself, observing what I did, was not too proud to do likewise,

though she would have none of Muirhead for teacher—by reason of his offence, I suppose, in having taken my side in the matter of my coming. It was Peesemsky, the Muscovish envoy, who taught Amy; the poor old gentleman having fallen, doubtless, under her spell, like others, and being glad of the opportunity of this much quiet intercourse with her.

Muirhead occasionally spoke with me of the Court at which he lived, and said many times that he thanked Heaven he had frightened Mary Hastings from offering herself a sacrifice to the terrible autocrat who ruled Muscovy with a rod of iron.

‘What of this one, then?’ I asked him, indicating Amy, who had just passed us, walking the deck, and had frowned blackly at each of us as she went.

‘I think Cæsar would meet his match,’ he laughed, ‘if only she were armed, like himself, with an iron-pointed staff—without it she will be at a disadvantage. True, she has her eyes!’

‘And her tongue,’ I added.

‘The tongue is a dangerous weapon in his presence,’ said Muirhead. ‘On the whole I consider that though tenfold better equipped to go through that which awaits her than ever Lady Mary could have been, yet the hour will come when she will wish to Heaven she had listened to the counsel of the wise—meaning my own—and remained in England.’

‘Oh, be sure she will not marry the Tsar if she desires otherwise!’ I laughed. Muirhead laughed also, but looked grave again as he spoke.

‘I am sure she will not marry the Tsar; that is not what I fear: the danger for her will begin when the Tsar discovers—as he may—that she is desirable, and she at the same time learns that she will have none of him.’

‘I shall prefer that to the other,’ said I, ‘for at that moment my duties will begin in earnest.’

‘At that moment,’ laughed Muirhead, ‘beware of Cæsar’s spiked staff, for be assured it will not be idle. The best would be if the Tsar in his rage refused to look at the maiden and sent her back with Sir Jerome. Why does her Grace wish to marry her cousins to a savage?’

‘Heaven help us all!’ said I, so gravely that Muirhead laughed, ‘if Amy is then sent back rejected by the Cæsar.’

Many a storm assailed us during that long voyage through the Northern seas, and right well, on the whole, did the good ship *Bona Esperanza* carry us. Nevertheless, we were more than

once in danger of being overwhelmed by the great waters. Once—I remember the occasion as a red-letter day—when it seemed that death awaited us all very near at hand, Amy clung to me.

‘I think we are about to perish, Herbert,’ she said, and I nodded my head, too full of many thoughts to find words.

‘I have not always been kind or even just to thee,’ Amy said; ‘you will forgive me this, Herbert, now that we part.’

‘Whether we live or die,’ I said, ‘I have always loved thee, Amy, and thee only, and so it must be in this or any other world, though well I know my love has no return.’

‘Love and I are strangers,’ she said, smiling a little. ‘When I speak of love I discuss that which I do not at all understand. Perhaps I could have loved if there were a man so masterful that—well enough that I do not hate thee so much as might seem from my unkindness; it is my nature to seem unkind, more especially perhaps when——’

‘Say no more of that, Amy, I am content,’ I said. ‘I would to God that any exertion of mine could save thee now from death, but I am as helpless as thou among these great waters.’

Afterwards, when that terrible storm was over and we were once more in unexpected safety, the remembrance of her kindness evidently weighed heavily upon Amy, for she bade me think nothing of what she had said in the fear of imminent death.

‘I desired to make a good end,’ she said, ‘and therefore I would have made thee happier by—by showing thee favour which I do not really feel.’

‘To pretend kindness when the heart is full of the opposite sentiment, and thus to deceive another with one’s last breath, is not to make a good end!’ I said, laughing.

‘That may or may not be,’ she replied; ‘but at any rate I shall remember thy rebuke, and good end or no end there shall be an end of kindness for thee, my friend, since it is not appreciated.’

‘Why should I appreciate what is confessedly not intended?’ I said.

But Amy would not continue the argument, and flounced away to join Peesemsky and to continue her practice in the Muscovish tongue.

It was nearly four months from the time of our departure from the Thames that we cast anchor before Archangel, glad indeed to have reached our destination in safety.

Here we found awaiting us a courtly deputation of the Cæsar’s

subjects, assembled to meet and escort us to Moscow. All these good folk bent the knee in homage to Amy Romalyn, as to the bride of Cæsar, and it must be said that Amy bore herself right nobly in her new dignity. Truly no queen could have received their homage more magnificently. My heart sank, for, thought I, she will be irresistible in the eyes of this Muscovish Cæsar, let him be ever so indignant that Mary Hastings should have sent him the *nolo episcopari*.

CHAPTER IX.

THAT was a gorgeous, semi-barbaric, yet on the whole a pleasant procession through Muscovy, from Archangel to Moscow. My sledge was far behind that of Amy, who travelled in a splendid equipage in company of the two envoys, followed and preceded by other grantees in less gorgeous vehicles. I had for companion a young boyar named Nagoy, with whom I was destined to have much intercourse later. This was a proud young Muscovish noble, but not too proud to be very inquisitive. Our conversation was in his own language, for he had no English, and assuredly I think there was no question as to my position in England, in this embassy, Amy's parentage, virtues, accomplishments, religion, history, and so forth that was left unasked by him. As for the answers, it was easy for me to plead inability to express myself in his tongue when his curiosity ran in awkward channels. In the villages through which we passed, the peasants, when they did not run away and hide themselves, as they sometimes did, the whole community disappearing, and leaving a deserted hamlet, prostrated themselves as we passed by, touching the snow with their foreheads, and so remaining until we had gone by. Once a child ran under a sledge and was badly hurt, and the procession would have continued on its way unheeding, had not Amy heard the cry of the babe, and insisted—to the astonishment of her Muscovish companions—upon stopping to attend to its hurts, which she did with her own hands, giving the parents money for the child, and finally kissing it before she re-entered her carriage.

My companion—Nagoy—was scornful, and even shocked, when he saw all this.

'To stop a cavalcade of boyars and grantees,' he said, 'for these beasts—bah! it is shameful!'

'They are human creatures,' I said, 'like yourself.'

Nagoy glared at me as though he would eat me.

'You are a guest of the Tsar,' he said, 'or you should not say that; they are beasts—a little better than the cattle and the pigs—not much.'

'I claim no privilege as guest of the Tsar!' I laughed; 'and I repeat that these people are human creatures like yourself, or me, or the Tsar himself. Have they no souls?'

'Have foreigners?' he said. Whereat I laughed aloud, to his astonishment and anger. After this we spoke little for the rest of the journey.

I afterwards discovered that the temper of Nagoy had suffered much in consequence of having had to wait nearly two months for us at Archangel, with the rest of those sent to meet us there. This must have been a trying period for all, but perhaps especially for those who, like this young boyar, had other fish to fry at Moscow.

We reached that great city in due course, having occupied, I think, some fourteen days in travelling from Archangel, which is the nearest, and some say the only, seaport of the Muscovish sovereign, and yet so distant from the capital.

Messengers had been sent on in front of us, together with a letter to the Cæsar or Tsar, from his envoy Peesemsky, in which it was explained that her Grace the Queen of England, unable to send over the seas that kinswoman whom she had first named, had despatched in her place one even more beautiful, and related, like Mary Hastings, to the throne. 'One beautiful as the stars,' the envoy wrote, 'whom to see is to love.'

The messenger rode quickly, and returned presently, bringing the reply to Peesemsky's letter.

'Let the Queen's embassy come before me immediately on arrival,' the Tsar wrote, 'but without this lady whom they have brought in place of the Lady Mary Hastings whom I invited. This one I have not invited. I will first see what this Sir Jerome Bowes has to say; afterwards I will receive her or not receive her.'

Peesemsky looked worried when he read the letter of his master. 'I fear his Grace is not pleased with the turn of affairs,' he said. 'I tremble for myself and also for thee, Sir Bowes; I know not how he will receive us.'

'Marry—will he chastise us?' Sir Jerome laughed. 'We are not children, my friend, to be afraid of a bogey.'

'It is very likely that he will chastise me,' said the

Muscovish envoy. 'Be not offended if he shout and curse at thee also.'

'If that be so, I shall take the bull by the horns!' said Sir Jerome; and, indeed, the sturdy ambassador did not lag behind his words, for he treated the Cæsar with scant respect, as shall presently be recorded.

The Muscovish sovereign was surrounded by many boyars and officials when we came into his presence, having left Amy with her woman in the terem, or female quarter, of the wooden palace in which we were received, there to prepare herself in case she should be summoned.

The King's son sat in a prominent place upon the right hand of his Grace, and upon his left a very prominent boyar, by name Boris Godunof (a noble destined, before many years should pass, to imperial dignity, to be achieved by means of acts which are not to be judged by such as I, especially since they have nothing to do with my own experiences in Muscovy and Amy's, which are all I have taken upon myself to record).

The Cæsar or Tsar himself sat upon a very remarkable seat or throne, the like of which was surely never seen upon this earth. The chair itself was fashioned of some wood, dark in colour, of which, however, nothing was to be seen, for embedded in it were rows of the blue stones known as turquoises, set so close together that nothing else was visible. It is said that the back alone of this marvellous chair contains no fewer than two thousand of these gems, all of a large and valuable size.

As for the Tsar himself, he seemed a thin, gaunt person of smallish size; his face bloodless and passion-worn, but with blazing eyes that rarely rested, but fixed themselves as he spoke now upon one object now upon another; unless, indeed, something in the conversation attracted his special attention, when he would suddenly gaze very intently upon the speaker, and often in a manner which was most disconcerting to him who must meet the stare, if not actually terrifying.

In the Tsar's hand was the oaken staff or *dubina*, with its ugly iron point, of which we had already heard.

He received us with scarce an inclination of the head, glancing from one to another of us as we entered. His eyes rested a moment upon me, and I saw them intensify as they looked. Doubtless the number of my inches surprised him, for he made some remark to Godunof, who now haughtily looked me up and down.

Sir Jerome Bowes advanced, introduced by Peesemsky; he bent his knee and bowed low enough, but, to my astonishment, I perceived that his hat was still upon his head. The Tsar observed the fact at the same moment, for he said aloud in querulous tones, addressing the interpreter:

‘Bid him take his hat off.’

‘I represent the Queen of England,’ said Sir Jerome, ‘and her Grace uncovers for no prince upon this earth.’

With the words he cocked his hat the more defiantly.

‘Is your Queen not content with insulting me in her own person by breaking her promises to me,’ said the Tsar, furiously banging the floor with the point of his staff, ‘but must needs add to her offence by sending an envoy whose manners reek of the stable?’

Sir Jerome now boldly declared that if any man, prince or noble, should say word to impugn the honour of his mistress, he was prepared to defend her honour to the death. With these words he threw his gauntlet upon the floor of the chamber, near the Tsar’s footstool.

Truly Sir Jerome fulfilled his threat of taking the bull by the horns, though in truth there were some who considered that he shamed his great mistress more than he honoured her.

Then followed an odd argument. For first the enraged Tsar declared that it was fortunate for Sir Jerome that his position as ambassador protected him, otherwise his head must have left his shoulders.

‘Ambassador of the greatest sovereign upon earth, deny it who will!’ cried Sir Jerome, ignoring the rest of the Tsar’s speech.

To this the Cæsar replied that he himself, at any rate, took leave to consider that her Grace was not his equal.

‘Oh, your Grace may be sure,’ cried Sir Jerome, ‘that my mistress is well able to make the greatest of princes—ay, even the Cæsar of Muscovy—sorrow of his malice.’

‘Ha!’ Ivan laughed derisively, ‘and what of the French King, and the Spanish?’

‘I say that the Queen, my mistress, is as great as any of them both!’ replied Sir Jerome, undaunted.

‘And what sayest thou of the Emperor of Germany?’ was the next taunt.

To this Sir Jerome replied that the King, the Queen’s late father, in his wars with France, had held the Emperor in his pay.

'Such is the greatness of my mistress, which let no one dare deny!' he ended defiantly.

Then the Tsar became of a sudden furiously angry and bade us withdraw, which command we promptly and gladly obeyed; and so ended our first audience of the Cæsar of Muscovy.

It was told us that the bluffness of Sir Jerome Bowes proved the cause of much ill-humour on the part of his Grace, which ill-humour being visited upon the courtiers around his person, in blows and curses and threatenings and every kind of ill-usage, Sir Jerome was not blessed by the Court for his sturdy championing of the Queen's honour.

Understanding the Muscovish tongue as I now did, I was able to learn more of the opinions of those around us than was Sir Jerome himself, of whom it was characteristic that he had declared he would not offend his tongue by causing it to struggle with the outlandish gibberish spoken by these barbarians. Consequently he had not a word of Russian, but trusted entirely to Muirhead, the interpreter.

CHAPTER X.

FOR many a day I never heard anything from Amy herself as to her first reception by the Tsar. Offended and mortified but even more angered was she, that is certain, for never would she speak of that experience.

Nevertheless, there were others present from whose descriptions of the scene I may quote, Muirhead, as interpreter, being one. Muirhead has often declared that Amy has never looked finer, haughtier, more beautiful than when she walked proudly into the Tsar's presence. The anger of the Cæsar was still at its flood height, for Sir Jerome had but a short while ended his audacious interview. The Prince Ivan still sat at the right of the jewelled chair of state, and Boris Godunof on the left, but there were few boyars present.

The Tsar did not fix his eyes upon Amy when she entered; he had turned his shoulder towards the door by which she entered the audience chamber, and so remained, as though he conversed with Godunof.

Nevertheless, having been informed that the lady from England had now entered, he shot over his shoulder a snarling

remark, though without glancing in her direction. But Muirhead has often described how the young Tsarevitch or Cæsarevitch, as they call the heir to Cæsar's throne, fixed his eyes upon Amy the moment she entered the room, and stared at her throughout the audience as though he would eat her.

'If thou art the young Englishwoman sent hither without an invitation by the Queen of England,' Ivan said over his shoulder, 'go back whence thou camest and tell the Queen—who is, I am told, thy kinswoman—that I had thought she was mistress in her own country, yet I find that not only the womenfolk are permitted to do as they please, but even her ambassadors are not instructed in the reverence due to princes, but are allowed to speak with unbridled tongues. Let Sir Bowes escort thee whence thou camest. Does the Queen thy cousin think that I cannot find a bride in my own country that she must needs foist upon me the sweepings of her Court?' Amy flushed, and replied angrily:

'Tell his Grace that the Queen, my mistress, will thank God that neither Mary Hastings nor I is a slave. We marry or not marry, as we please. Tell him also that if her Grace had known what manner of bridegroom was this she sent me to see, she would have spared me the journey.'

Muirhead did not translate the speech literally. His version was this: that in England women marry whom they please, and it did not please Mary Hastings to go so far for a husband; her Grace, he said, knew not how long was the journey upon which she had sent this lady whom the Tsar now rejected.

'Ha! and says the lady nothing of her own feelings?' said the Tsar. 'She has come a long way to be disappointed in her hopes. She had, doubtless, fixed her ambitions on becoming the bride of the Cæsar?'

Muirhead translated this to Amy, who understood it well enough without his interference. 'Let me recommend you to make some conciliatory reply,' he said, noting Amy's flashing eyes and fearing an angry rejoinder, for he had not lived in Amy's company four months without learning something of her haughty temperament.

But Amy would have none of his interference. Distrusting Muirhead, she now plunged for herself into the Muscovish language.

'*Nyet, nyet!*' ('No, no!') she said aloud and defiantly; 'I did not know, or I would not have come.'

'Ha! you did not know!' the Tsar still threw the words over

his shoulder without turning his head. 'How should you know that the Tsar would refuse to have for his wife pushed down his throat by the English Queen any woman she chose to send him? Now that you know this, you may return and tell her.'

'*Nyet, nyet!*' said Amy again, 'the Queen did not know, and I did not know, that the Tsar is like one of his own *medvedyi!*'

There was a stir in the audience chamber; every boyar present gasped and looked at the Tsar. The prince opened his mouth as wide as his eyes. Godunof concealed a smile as he glanced in the Tsar's face. Amy had called his Grace a bear! What would happen next?

Ivan turned quickly round upon his turquoise throne, and for the first time his eyes fell full upon this audacious English girl.

For a moment no one spoke as the Tsar sat and glared at Amy. Muirhead expected to see the iron-pointed staff poised and thrown, and was prepared to seize the girl by the arms and drag her out of the line of fire. Then the good Scotsman did a daring thing.

'Majesty,' he said, 'she knows not the Russian language; in her own tongue the word is used differently; she would have said "she knew not that the Tsar had been irritated."'

'So!' muttered Ivan, still gazing at the haughty girl, who gazed defiantly back. 'She is young, and—as it appears—the Queen's servants know no better manners. Let her be taken back to the terem, Muirhead; when Bowes returns she will return with him.'

Ivan made a gesture with his hand and Muirhead, thanking God for the opportunity, swept Amy away as quickly as might be.

'What have you done?' he whispered in her ear. 'You have called the Cæsar a bear.' Amy replied angrily and aloud:

'A bear he is—knows he no better manners than to receive a lady with his shoulder to her? Marry, I will call a bear a bear, let him be Tsar or plain man!

'Did you mark that I made him turn and face me in the end?' she continued. 'Oh, the bear, the bear that he is!—maybe I shall yet tame that bear, Muirhead. Shall I put a ring in his nose and compel him to dance to my music; what think you?'

'I think not,' said Muirhead. 'You have not seen such a bear as this, Mistress Amy; be careful or he will eat you up!'

'Let him be careful, rather! I say I will tame him.'

'Do as thou wilt, but call him not bear again, for by Heaven's mercy I know not how thou art alive, having so called him.'

'Dost thou not? dost thou not? Maybe I could tell thee. This bear is in some matters a man!' Amy laughed, though her eyes still blazed with fury; 'I tell thee, Muirhead, I will tame the man in him and the bear in him.'

'What, you are still determined,' said Muirhead, 'to aspire to be Cæsar's bride?'

'Heaven forbid!' said Amy; 'I said I would tame the beast, not marry him!'

'If that be your intention,' said Muirhead, 'then may God help you!'

Telling me of this notable audience of Amy, Muirhead was much concerned for her. 'She knows not what she does, nor what passions she threatens to arouse for her sport; that way lies death, Shadwell. I tremble for the child.'

'She is angry and means not all she says,' I replied; 'moreover, be sure, my friend, that as her guardian I shall see that she does not run her head into the bear's open mouth.'

'If I judge rightly,' said Muirhead, 'she is one who will act as she pleases, be it wisely or foolishly.'

I took upon myself to argue with Amy upon her foolishness, but came off but poorly.

'But for the wit of Muirhead you were lost,' I told her, 'for I hear that you grossly offended his Grace.'

'Tell Muirhead that I love not babbling tongues,' she snapped, 'and that I will neither be interfered with by him nor will I have tales carried concerning my behaviour, which is neither his affair nor yours.'

'I am told that never since this Tsar ascended the throne has any but one person so greatly dared as thou this day; it is madness to attempt to withstand this Ivan, who is called by his people Grosny—the Cruel or Terrible.'

'If it was a woman that withstood him, I wager he married her,' laughed Amy. 'Can you not see, or is your understanding too dense, that a palate cloyed with sweets would delight in a flavour of acid long withheld from it? Who was this woman; which of his six wives?'

'It was no woman, but a boyar, one Prince Krapatkin, the Prince of Daredevils he should be called if I am told truly, for he bearded the Cæsar until the Cæsar wearied of him and despatched him upon a campaign against the Siberian chiefs.'

'Will he return presently?' asked Amy. 'That is a man I could love.'

'As for returning, be sure that Ivan sent him where death certainly awaits him. As for loving such a man, it is foolish to speak of loving where one has not seen.'

'At least I may say,' replied Amy, flashing an angry glance at me, 'that of those men I have yet seen there is none I could ever love.'

When it came to this, I thought the time had come to end the conversation, from which I seemed to be deriving little advantage.

CHAPTER XI.

AMY lost little time in bettering her acquaintance with the chief personages of the realm into which fortune or her own rashness had placed her to live. It is the custom in Muscovy that young women of the boyar rank be kept in strict seclusion. They are not to be seen excepting on rare occasions, and then heavily veiled; and for their accommodation each house is provided with its *terem*, or women's quarters, in which they are obliged to remain, amusing themselves as best they may with sewing, with playing upon the *balaleika*, and doubtless with listening to attractive tales of men and morals told for their entertainment by the older women of the house or palace: those who have already tasted of the delights of the wicked world that lies without the *terem* and the walled garden in which they are allowed to stroll.

And thus they live until the day comes for their betrothal, which is arranged for them by their parents, unless, indeed, the Tsar himself or his son should desire to marry, in which case every maiden of boyar rank has an equal chance of being chosen, for the Tsar or his son, as the case may be, will have the very best of his own choice, and all are assembled in each district, where an officer selects the more likely, weeding out the ugly, deformed, ill-favoured, and the weaklings, sending the best only to Moscow, where the Cæsar or his Cæsarevitch shall make his final choice.

Amy was, of course, quartered like other women in the *terem* of the palace, where, possibly, the *duenna* in charge of the women thought to retain her in accordance with the strict rules of the place. But Amy made short work of the old woman who attempted

to prevent her going when and where she would—she and her woman Joan.

'*Ya Anglichanka*' ('I'm English'), she said. 'Please make way: I will go out for exercise.'

'*Nyet, nyet, nelzya!*' ('No, you can't!') said the duenna, placing her back to the door, while the roomful of women laughed—all but Amy. Amy stamped her foot and flashed her eyes at the old woman.

'*Ya poidoo gdyé hochoo!*' ('I intend to go where I please!') she said, and so haughtily, I doubt not, that the duenna lost heart and allowed her to pass without further words. When Amy had passed out, the old lady made a gesture of spitting, and crossed herself, muttering a prayer.

'These foreigners are all mad!' she said. 'Let her do as she will; it is not my business. You giggling fools are enough for me to manage!'

'You are right, Matushka!' said a laughing girl. 'Hold the Anglichanka if you can; do you know that but yesterday she called the Tsar a bear? How should poor little you deal with a maiden who dares to call the Tsar a bear?'

'Peace, fool; this is nonsense you talk, and worse—it is sacrilege—to call the Cæsar a bear! Whence got you this foolish tale?'

'Young Gagarin told me so this morning,' said the girl, off her guard.

'Oho! young Gagarin; and pray where did it please thee to meet young Gagarin, hussy?'

The young ladies of the terem knew very well how and where to meet the youthful boyars of the Court, if it pleased them to do so, while the duenna slept in her chair; but they were seldom so foolish as to convict themselves in this simple fashion. Olga Glinkof, the offender, suffered for her foolishness by stricter imprisonment for a week.

All this was told me by young Gagarin himself, who assured me further that he saw Olga whenever he liked.

'It is not difficult,' he laughed.

But I must tell of Amy's adventure of the day I speak of. Amy went forth, dressed for walking out of doors, accompanied by Joan, wrapped, like her mistress, in furs. They walked awhile in the streets without, and passing the doors of a great church were about to step within in order to inspect what they could see of the wide, dark nave, when there encountered them on the threshold

three men. These three men were the Cæsar himself, his son, and Boris Godunof, the favourite boyar of the day.

The Tsar glared in displeasure, without recognising.

‘Two women, walking unveiled and by daylight; go back to your terems for shame, you graceless ones!’ he said.

‘It is the beautiful Anglichanka!’ exclaimed the Cæsarevitch—the first words Amy had yet heard him speak.

‘Peace, fool!’ cried his father, turning upon him.

‘Do you not know,’ he continued, frowning upon Amy, ‘that in this country it is a shame for women to be seen unveiled? Go back to your terem, girl.’

‘Tsar,’ said Amy, smiling, and pushing back the coverings which half concealed her face, protecting it from the frost. ‘We English women are accustomed to go where we will; we need air and exercise; see how pale my cheek is from confinement within doors.’ All this Amy said in her broken Russian, which, Godunof told me, sounded pretty enough from her lips. ‘As for her cheeks,’ said he, ‘which she had denounced for their pallor, I swear to you they were like two apples, and her eyes had in them all the laughter of all the devils of mischief.’

‘Fie!’ said the Tsar; ‘cover thy face.’ Nevertheless, his eyes dwelt upon Amy’s with a softer expression this time. ‘Thou hast a witch’s eyes,’ he said. ‘Tell me, art thou considered like this kinswoman of thine, Mary Hastings?’

‘My enemies will tell thee yes, Tsar!’ Amy laughed.

‘It is unseemly to think too well of thyself,’ he rejoined. ‘When thou returnest to thy mistress thou shalt tell her the Cæsar will choose his own wife. Cherish no foolish hopes that I will have thee.’

‘When I return there will be much to tell the Queen,’ said Amy. ‘As for hopes—there is much that must come before hoping begins.’

‘So, and what is that?’ asked the Cæsar, always gazing in her face.

‘First, to be sure that the thing to be hoped for is a thing desirable——’

‘Stay,’ said Ivan, frowning, ‘thy Russian is faulty; I do not understand.’

Amy tried to express her meaning in other words. The Tsar’s frown did not relax.

‘Is it not a thing desirable to be the wife of the Cæsar?’ he said.

‘If the Cæsar were kind; not if——’

‘Go back to thy terem, witch,’ said Ivan, interrupting her; ‘fear not, the Cæsar desires no witch-wife. When Sir Bowes departs, depart thou with him.’

Amy curtsied and smiled in the Tsar’s face. Then her eye sought those of the staring prince who stood beside his father, having gazed at the girl throughout the conversation, and she smiled even more sweetly. The Cæsarevitch gave a gasp. The Tsar frowned blackly, and his fingers moved convulsively upon the stem of the staff which he held.

‘Go to thy terem!’ he said angrily; ‘I will not see thee again before Bowes departs.’

The Tsar walked moodily for a few moments without speaking. Then he suddenly turned his head.

‘They enter the church,’ he said, and made as though he too would return; but, after making a few paces, he changed his mind and continued in the former direction.

‘She has the eyes of a witch, Boris,’ he said; ‘eyes which might enchain the soul of a man against his will. Let us pray that the devil and his enchantments come not nigh the soul of any just person in this land. See thou to it, son,’ he continued, turning to the Cæsarevitch, ‘that this witch-woman enchant thee not.’

‘She is more beautiful than our Russians!’ said young Ivan.

‘It is the beauty of the devil. See thou look elsewhere when she is present, supposing that you should meet again; but with Sir Bowes she shall depart.’

‘That is difficult,’ said the Cæsarevitch, ‘to look elsewhere when there is such a face to gaze upon; it is a feast to the eyes, my father.’

‘Is that so?’ cried Ivan furiously; ‘then thou shalt fast, my friend, and not feast; such food is poison to the soul. Go quickly to church, fool, and pray that the devil enter not into thee in the smiles of a witch-woman.’

‘I go, my father,’ said the Cæsarevitch, and turning from the Tsar’s side he made as though he would return to the church in which they had lately worshipped, the same which Amy had just entered. The Tsar smote him smartly across the shoulders with the wooden end of his staff.

‘Darest thou so far? Wouldst thou make a jest of thy father’s counsel?’ he said savagely. ‘Verily, the devil is already at work upon thy soul!’

Then the Cæsarevitch turned and came humbly homewards, neither he nor his father speaking any further words until the palace was reached.

When Godunof told me all this, he laughed much. 'I know not how this will end,' he said, 'for truly she has the eyes of a witch. Nevertheless, if she were maiden of mine, or one in whom I had interest as friend or guardian, by the mercy of Heaven I should not rest until Sir Bowes were well away, and she with him.'

'What is the particular danger?' I asked, knowing well the while that the air reeked of danger on every side.

'There are two great dangers,' he laughed: 'one is the Tsar-bear, and the other is the Tsarevitch-cub. Other dangers, of which perhaps you are not aware, being as yet ignorant of the inner things of this Court, are the Nagoy's.'

CHAPTER XII.

THIS saying of Boris Godunof's puzzled me not a little. It was easy, indeed, to understand that he foresaw danger for Amy from Tsar Ivan, and through him from his son also; for who that lived about the Court of Cæsar could say that he stood not in peril of his life or freedom? For the Cæsar's actions the Cæsar was accountable to no one; upon his love for man or for woman, that it would last for this period or for that, or outlive the passion of one moment of fury, no person could rely.

'Your Anglichanka does not know this,' said Godunof, when I questioned him further. 'She trusts too much to the magic of her beauty; with Ivan this is not safe—tell her so. It will suffice her for three offences, or for ten, maybe, but at the eleventh he will suddenly turn upon her; let her be warned of this.'

'But what of the Nagoy's?' I demanded of him. 'Danger from the Tsar is a standing-dish for all who stand about his person—that is an obvious matter; but what of the Nagoy's?'

Godunof frowned and shook his head. 'Find out for thyself, my friend,' he said. 'Soon enough you will understand. Meanwhile, if you bear me any gratitude for the warning I have given you, or at least bear me no ill, forget who gave thee either this hint or that, while remembering the substance.'

'I do not understand,' I said. 'Your head is higher than the Nagoy's: why should you fear for them?'

'You would know too much,' he replied. 'I am sorry I spoke to you; I see that my words will yet be a danger to me.'

'Stay, you may trust me—I will be discreet,' I protested. 'Tell me now about these Nagoy's. I do not understand why they are to be feared. I have not discovered that either of the brothers has as yet honoured my friend with the slightest attention, and if they had she is well able to——'

Godunof laughed.

'You hunt the hare instead of the wolf,' he said. 'Nay, I will say no more; forget me as the sayer, I pray you.'

When I knew Boris Godunof better, I learned that though a schemer of the very first rank, his character was the most subtle imaginable. No snake would creep towards its object more cautiously than he. Doubtless even in this warning to myself he had in view some object of importance to his own ends, though no thought of this occurred to me at the time.

I was, however, anxious to understand why Amy must beware of these Nagoy's, and with the object of satisfying my curiosity I went to Muirhead.

'So!' said he, 'the hare runs that way, then, again? I thought—but stop, who told thee? One that knew?'

'I am not to name my informant—I have promised—if there is anything to know, I should say that he may well know it.'

'This is a hare that ran before Lady Mary Hastings,' he laughed; 'the hunt was long since thrown up—from the day, indeed, that this new scent crossed the trail. Yes, I understand the warning. If the Tsar——'

'Muirhead, for the love of Heaven, remember that I know nothing of thy hares and huntings; my thoughts cannot keep pace with your own.'

'Pardon!' he laughed, 'I will explain. Before it occurred to the Cæsar in his wisdom to send oversea for a bride unseen, he went near to deciding upon a lady nearer home, one Maria Nagoy, the sister of that young Nagoy who travelled with thee; this Maria was suddenly thrown over in order that the Cæsar might marry a foreign wife and thereby ally himself with our good Queen Bess. Then followed his disappointment, and with it has come the revival of the hopes of Maria Nagoy; she——'

'I understand!' I cried, the light breaking upon me; 'why, Muirhead, this may be good news, not bad! May the Lord send

this Maria Nagoy all success and the fulfilment of her ambition, and that quickly !' Muirhead smiled.

'Nevertheless,' he said, 'the warning is useful. We deal, my friend—if I may call myself your friend and hers—with one whose temperament is as little to be counted upon as the Cæsar's itself. She has, as we are both well aware, vowed to tame the Tsar ; that means, mark you, that she will use every feminine art to subdue his heart and to bring him to her feet. Whether she succeed or fail—and God grant she fails !—the jealousy of the Nagoy's will meanwhile remain a standing danger.'

'But Amy would never ally herself to this man, even though he prayed at her feet for her love.'

'That may or may not be true ; how do we know what she would do ? Her present idea is to tame the bear and then escape—a matter of frightful danger, mark you—but when a Cæsar pleads who shall say beforehand that a maiden will do this or do that ? It is a difficult matter to refuse an offered crown ; how many women in this world's history have so done ?'

'Let Amy be the very first, but she would refuse it. When was there such another king that offered it ? As soon she would mate with a tiger or any other great beast. If there were serious danger of any kind from these Nagoy's, they might be told this ?'

'The tale would go straight to the Tsar, be very sure of it ! And then where would our poor Amy Romalyn be ? No, my friend, by every means let her go back to England with Sir Jerome, and the sooner the better. The Nagoy's are a danger, though one that may be guarded against. It is the Cæsar himself who is a danger against which no man may guard—the pestilence that walketh at noonday and at night-time. Let her go, man, let her go.'

'It is easy to say "let her go," Muirhead ; how should I or any other man persuade her if she will not ?'

'Compel her,' said Muirhead. Whereupon we both laughed, though for my part there was not much mirth in my laughter.

Meanwhile that happened which was of the worst possible augury for the success of any persuasion that I might address to Amy in order to induce her to return to England.

The Tsar Ivan sent for Amy to the audience chamber.

This time his Grace did not avert his eyes, but gazed in the girl's face as she entered, and continued to look upon her with the fixed, intent look which was a characteristic of the man when interested. His son the Cæsarevitch, dutiful child of his father, stared at Amy with equal fixity.

'I have sent for thee, Amy Romalyn,' said the Tsar, 'in order to tell thee that Sir Bowes will leave Moscow in two weeks from this day.'

Amy flushed and inclined her head, but said nothing.

'I have reflected,' the Cæsar continued, 'that this is short notice for thee—I would not seem inhospitable—it may be to thy desire to see more of my country?'

Amy, with a reverence, declared that she could well prepare herself for departure in a fortnight.

'It is not my will,' said Ivan shortly, an angry look, passing like a flash across his face.

'There is no reason that I should remain,' said Amy; 'I will depart with Sir Jerome.'

'I have reflected,' the Tsar continued, 'that to return thee to the Queen, thy cousin, would be shameful to thee.'

Amy's eyes flashed; the speech angered her.

'It may be,' she said, 'that her Grace will not be surprised to see me back. I made the Queen no promise to remain in Muscovy.'

'How couldst thou know beforehand what should be my mind in this matter? Or was the Queen well aware that she would act unfriendly towards me? If so, her offence is the greater.'

'I will tell thee truly, Tsar,' said Amy. 'Her Grace, my mistress, is in no wise to blame for my coming, nor yet for the not coming of my cousin, Mary Hastings. I came because I would come. "I will go in the place of Mary," I said, "if she is afraid to venture, though I will not promise to stay in the lion's den."''

'Does the Lion of Muscovy roar so loud that he is heard at the Queen's Court?' said Ivan. 'Mary Hastings was a fool: the lion can turn lamb when he will.'

Amy said nothing.

'Then thou camest of thy own will; thou art a rash maiden. Well, stay, since thou hast dared so much to come—the lion will not eat thee, though he will mate where he pleases. I will not send thee away; Sir Bowes shall tell his mistress that I have allowed thee to remain awhile.'

'Nay, I will depart, Tsar,' said Amy.

'There are boyars at the Court whose blood ran, like my own, in the veins of Rurik; I will find thee as good a husband as thou shalt get in England, as rich and almost royal.'

Amy made a quick grimace. 'As to husbands, I desire none of them,' she said; 'may I not follow the example of your Grace, and mate where I please?'

'Thou art a saucy minx,' said Ivan, actually laughing. 'Come, I desire thee to stay awhile in my country. Wouldst thou refuse the Tsar's hospitality?'

I, standing in a group of men, next to Bowes, blurted out at this, speaking in English:

'Amy, for God's sake beware how you answer!' The Tsar half turned his head impatiently towards me, but kept his eyes fixed upon Amy.

Amy took no notice of my warning.

'If the Tsar himself desires it, that is a different matter,' she replied, smiling.

'I do desire it,' he replied. Then he turned upon us with an angry face. 'Who dared to interrupt when the Tsar spoke?' he asked, and I stepped forward.

'So, it was thou, long fellow! thy manners are ill—little better than thy master's' (meaning Sir Jerome); 'and what, pray, didst thou say?'

'I warned her beware how she replied,' I said.

'Which signified what?'

'That is as the lady understood it,' I faltered; and Amy interrupted:

'He is right, Tsar; he bade me be careful how I replied, for we are both servants of the Queen, our mistress, whose will in this matter must of course be considered. I had so considered it, unknown to him, beforehand, and therefore I replied to your Grace as I did.'

'Good!' said Ivan; 'nevertheless, Sir Bowes, see that this long fellow departs with thee when thou returnest; I like not his bearing any more than thy own.' Sir Jerome bowed but said nothing; since his first adventure with the Tsar he had held little converse with him, being perhaps somewhat ashamed of his rudeness. The Tsar rose and withdrew, casting a final glance over his shoulder at Amy. Seeing that his son did likewise, he said something angrily to him as they disappeared.

Amy now departed, and I followed as quickly as might be, intending to overtake her in the corridor, if possible, for I must speak with her. As I shouldered my way through the group of persons at the door, I caught sight of young Nagoy, my travelling companion from Archangel. His face was convulsed with rage, and his eyes, as they followed Amy's departing figure, were ablaze with a very ugly light.

(To be continued.)

Further Ranching Recollections.

AN UNLUCKY INVESTMENT.

AFTER the rupture with Ryan, detailed in the pages of this Magazine a year or so ago,* I was greatly at a loss to know what next to go at, and spent the following eighteen months in trying first one thing and then another without happening upon anything at all satisfactory. Towards the close of this time I put an advertisement in one of the principal papers of the State, more from curiosity than expecting anything from it, to the effect that the advertiser, educated, with a capital of a certain amount, would be glad to hear of an opportunity to employ it usefully. Naturally I had several answers of the kind one might expect. One of them, from a lady, suggested the starting of a newspaper in the mining town from which she dated. 'Being an educated person,' she wrote, 'you can write the paper yourself.' My correspondent was ready and anxious to undertake the business end of the proposition, to solicit advertising and subscriptions, and to make herself generally useful. 'It will coin money,' she assured me. It is hard to say what might not have resulted had the idea been followed up. But from what I had gathered in conversation, and from time-honoured jokes in the comic papers and so forth, I had formed an impression that the editor of a paper in a mining camp would find a certain handiness with a six-shooter more to the purpose than a waggon-load of diplomas, and as this was a qualification I could not claim, I put her off.

Then there were three or four from inventors, each with an independent fortune in his grasp, if only he could get a little financial assistance. There was one too, I remember, from a man who wanted someone to go into the jewellery business with him—400 per cent. profit on most kinds of jewellery, he assured me! One also from an adventurer—greatly in earnest this man was—

* 'Recollections of Tenderfoot,' *Longman's Magazine*, June 1903.

setting forth the huge profits to be made by buying out a drug store in a well known temperance town. 'All the drug-store proprietors here,' he wrote, 'are making money hand over fist selling liquor.' In all temperance towns the drug stores are permitted to sell alcohol in its various forms as a medicine, and it is not hard to find a doctor accommodating enough to prescribe. Often, under a lax administration of the city ordinances, no prescription is necessary, and the drug stores do a thriving business, paying no licence as saloons have to do. It is one of the stock arguments against the 'temperance clause' (a proviso inserted in the deed to each lot in a temperance town, to the effect that if the sale of liquor is allowed on it the deed thereby becomes void) that the drug stores will sell it any way, and pay no licence, whereas if 'high licence' is adopted the greater part of the town's revenue will be furnished from the enemy's pocket.

Among the couple of dozen letters that the advertisement brought there was not a single one that deserved serious consideration, and I turned my thoughts to ranching again. It seemed to me to be, on the whole, the safest, if slow and laborious. What little money I had made out West had been in cattle, in dealing in them, it is true, rather than raising them, but I had, perforce, acquired some little experience in handling them, and at least came nearer to knowing what an old cow was worth than I did about a newspaper office, a jewellery business, or a disguised saloon. Chance threw me across a man who had a nice bunch of cattle on a mountain ranche, and who wanted to sell a half interest. We had foregathered in an hotel in the very temperance town where was the drug store I had been invited to buy out, and had hung around together for a couple of days or so, during which time we had found no difficulty at all in getting any liquid refreshment we felt ourselves in need of at any of the drug stores.

When he left town for the ranche I went along with him at his invitation, and fell in love with the place at sight. The cattle too were a tempting-looking bunch, all well-bred and nearly all young. Greatly did I long for Ryan in the negotiations which followed. The price on the cattle seemed reasonable enough—lower, in fact, than I should have expected to hear, quality considered. I had kept tolerably well posted on the price of stock all along, and thought there seemed to be a bargain in this lot. The value of the ranche was harder to estimate. I made what inquiries I could, but I have long since recognised that I did not probe the matter as thoroughly as I should have done. It

was a 'dry' ranche—that is, there was no chance for irrigation. I was assured by such of the residents of the vicinity as I questioned in my stay of two or three days that irrigation was not needed, that crops had never failed there, though they had been better some years than others, as happens anywhere. It is a fact that at the higher altitudes of the Rocky Mountains crops without water do not burn up and parch as readily as they do on the plains, and also that the rainfall is, as a rule, considerably heavier. More years than not, such crops as will grow at these elevations will do from well to moderately so, but there are years when they fail entirely, as I found later to my cost. Either my informants said the thing that was not, or, as is possible, there came later a cycle of dry seasons. It is only fair to say that 'farming,' by which in the United States is meant agriculture, had not been tried very long at those altitudes at the time of which I am writing. The first settlers in the mountains had thought the season too short for anything to grow, and had contented themselves with cutting the natural hay which in those days grew abundantly in every little valley and gulch. As the supply of this grew shorter with increasing settlement and the multiplication of stock, they took to sowing oats for hay, and found that this was generally a sure crop.

The 'improvements' on the place, as the buildings, fences, ditches, and what not are always called in Western parlance, were all in good repair and good of their kind. The looks of the place were entirely in its favour. It was pretty, homelike, and cosy. The atmosphere was very much cooler than that of the plains, and the grass, which was abundant, was green, contrasting strongly enough with the brown prairie two thousand feet lower. In fact, as someone has said before me, if a man liked that kind of thing it was just the kind of thing he would like.

For better or worse the bargain was struck, and I found myself a half owner in this property. By arrangement, I was to live on the ranche and the vendor elsewhere—his wife, who had been a considerable heiress, refusing to live out of town. He was to bear his share of the expenses and furnish what help was necessary.

Not easily does the tenderfoot shed his tenderness. In the very part of the deal in which I had trusted my judgment the most I had made two fatal mistakes. I had bought, though of course I knew it not, at the beginning of a falling market; thence the bargain I thought I was getting. Six weeks after the deal was closed, I could have bought the same class of cattle for little

more, perhaps not any more, than half what I had given. With a fuller experience I might have been able to construe the signs of the times. Cattle had been high for a number of years, and a reaction was to be looked for. An older head would have expected it and would have decided it was no time to buy. Here I was, six weeks later, with a great part of my investment already decreased a half in value and the end not in sight. Nothing to be done but hold on to them and let them 'grow it out.' This plan, however, postulates that they remain alive, and this is precisely what they would not do. Here came in the second and more fatal error than the first. Their very breeding and quality was against them; they were too 'fine-haired'—that is, not hardy enough to endure the mountain winters, and never thrive. It took some years to convince me of this fact, but long afterwards, surveying the so to say scarred and maimed remnant of what had once been as pretty a herd as a lover of stock need wish to cast his eye over, I could not but allow that the theory was proved up to the hilt.

I take no special blame to myself for this error—many a man with far more experience than myself has made the mistake of taking the wrong class of cattle into the mountains. Even now, I am not able to say that any hard-and-fast rule can be laid down, so much depends on circumstances and what provision is made for taking care of them. In those days cattle were expected to make their own living, winter and summer. The free range, or Uncle Sam's grass, was the basis of the industry. It was expected that there would be a few weak sisters who would need a little help towards spring, but the great bulk of the herd were supposed to 'rustle' their living the year round. All that was expected of the ranche was a place to live and to grow a little feed for the saddle and work horses, and for those semi-invalids just mentioned whose number in a herd of two hundred and fifty should not exceed twenty head.

Mercifully the troubles in store were hidden in the dimness of the future. I knew, of course, that cattle had gone down terribly since I bought, but, after all, the purchase had been made as a permanent investment, and not at all as a speculation, and I trusted by holding on to grow the money back. Besides, no one could tell how long the depression might last. It might be over in six months; there were plenty to say it would be. There was no use in looking on the dark side, and I took up my abode on my new property with fair hopes and much pride and enthusiasm.

I was 'backing it' alone, it is true, but supreme, and what a

difference that made! If there was no Ryan to take the lead and responsibility, there was no Mrs. Ryan to make the house hateful. When I went on to the ranche it was summer and the stock was doing well. The season was unusually good. We had a wonderful amount of rain that year, and the crops in our district were the best ever raised up to that time, and I guess the 'best ever.' I can vouch that I never saw as good ones again during several years spent in the same neighbourhood.

For some reason my partner, who had seen to the putting in of the crops in the spring, had had quite a large patch of potatoes planted; large, that is, for anyone not raising them in a regular commercial way. In some parts of the State, where potatoes do specially well, two hundred acres is not considered extraordinarily large. In such places they have of course all kinds of labour-saving machinery and appliances. When it is a question of one man and a helper getting potatoes out of the ground with forks, three acres, which was the size of our patch, will seem a whole lot. In the digging and storing of these potatoes I came near to losing some of the enthusiasm with which I had started in. Of all back-breaking work commend me to picking up potatoes. Day after day did I toil over that patch with a neighbour to help. When at last they were all dug and housed in the cellar, I asked my assistant if I had better close the outer door. He advised me not to. 'You want to keep them just as cool as you can. They won't freeze in that cellar if that door isn't shut all the winter.' This remark cost me something later.

Haying and harvest over, the next in order was to ride the range, see where the cattle were, and work them towards home. About this time, the middle of October, we had a protracted storm which lasted a week and wound up with a foot of snow. This soon disappeared under the still powerful sun; but the nights were cold, and a good deal of ice formed on the north slopes, and riding home fast one afternoon my horse stepped on one of these and fell flat on his side, spraining my ankle severely and shaking me up a good deal. He was on his legs before I was, and made good use of them by running off home, leaving me, when I got over the first shock, to hobble after him a good long mile. Arrived home, my troubles were by no means at an end; there was no one to do anything except myself. I had all the evening 'chores' to do—horses to feed and water, a cow to milk, wood and water to get for the house, &c. When I got through it was about ten o'clock, and I was entirely exhausted. The chance of some such

accident as this happening is a great drawback to living alone, but what little I endured is as nothing compared with stories I have heard of what men living by themselves on lonely ranches have gone through and come out alive—one in particular, where a man got snake-bit, and saved himself only by extraordinary nerve and endurance, has always haunted me. But space forbids me to set it down.

Next morning, of course, my ankle was worse, and with great difficulty I saddled a horse, got on him somehow, and rode to a neighbour's, where I got an old fellow who was staying there, and who, I also knew, had long outstayed his welcome, to come and do my chores till I was able to get around. The job just suited him. There was just enough to do to keep up his appetite; he was an inveterate novel-reader, and there were several lying around; and lame as I was, when he wanted to argue, which, when he was tired of reading, was his favourite amusement, he had a victim ready to hand who could not escape him.

I don't know that I ever got so tired of a man before or since. His ignorance was colossal, and his self-conceit so amazing as to be almost sublime. What he did not know himself he could not believe that anyone else knew, which in his case was to pass a sponge over nearly the whole stock of knowledge painfully acquired by the human race in the course of centuries. Not that this gave him a moment's pause. He scoffed, I remember in this connection, at the idea that the earth moved round the sun. Anyone, he maintained, with ordinary horse sense, could see it was the other way. And yet, from his novel-reading, he had gathered a few ideas which rattled about in his mind, and formed a most wonderful medley, as they fitted in in no way with his experience. He had come West at an early age, and had lived on the 'frontier,' as he called it, nearly all his life, and from this standpoint he judged the universe. A very little of him was amusing, but he soon began to pall. He had, as the saying is, a firm grasp of the obvious, and used to bore me almost to death by ridiculous hypotheses such as this. 'Suppose now,' he would say, 'I was over thar,' meaning in England, which country he used to question me about a good deal, particularly with reference to class distinctions, a subject which had a great fascination for him; 'suppose I was over thar a-travelling along the road, and it was coming on sundown, and I hadn't got no-where—if I was to go up to one of them big houses and knock, and the woman of the house was to come to the door, and I was to

ask what would be the chanst to get to stay all night, and giv her to understand I expected to pay for any accommodation I got, that I wasn't no tramp—she'd turn me down—I wouldn't be high toned enough.' In vain to suggest that in a thickly populated country, where places of public entertainment were to be found every few miles, it was not the custom for private people to entertain strangers. He took a perverse satisfaction in regarding this imaginary reverse as a personal slight. 'Well, sir,' he would wind up, 'I consider myself just exactly as good as any man on earth as long as I behave myself.' How many times he enunciated this nauseating formula during his stay I am afraid to say. He generally closed with a profuse expectoration, a habit no doubt included under the head of good behaviour.

Oddly enough, I had to nurse him after I got well myself. He had a bad attack of sciatica, and doubtless suffered intensely, but one's sympathy was chilled by his entire lack of self-control. I was thankful when a son of his did finally call and take him away.

While I was laid up the cattle had scattered again, and my riding had to be done over. Another loss due to my not being around to see to things was a large part of the potato crop. We had, while I was laid by, an unprecedented 'cold snap' for the time of year—that is, the thermometer reaching twenty below zero and lower. Shut up in the house I never thought of the potatoes and that outer door left open, and unfortunately there were enough in the house for immediate use. When I did go into the cellar I was dismayed to hear the potatoes rattle like bricks as I dropped them into the bucket. Investigation showed that about half the crop was ruined. So much for trusting to other people. This was quite a disaster in a small way. A railroad was being built through the country, and some thousands of men were distributed along the right of way and in the woods, grading and getting out ties, or sleepers as I suppose they are still called in England. All ranche produce was in demand at a good price. I suppose the freezing of these potatoes meant the loss of a hundred and fifty dollars at least. It was another tender-foot trick. These were the first potatoes I had ever had charge of, and as usual I bought my experience.

Mentioning the railroad reminds me that I took a small contract myself just after I got rid of my nurse and patient. This was to get out and deliver at any place convenient to me on the right of way two thousand ties. The price was thirty-five cents

apiece, of which fifteen went to the maker. Any moderately good tie-maker can turn out thirty ties a day in good timber, and the timber we had was ideal for the purpose, being in those days almost virgin. There had been a saw-mill or two in the neighbourhood, but the trees fit for ties were rather small for saw logs, and there were acres and acres of straight and sound red spruce-trees awaiting the devastating axe, which has since laid them low, to the lasting injury of the country.

Of these ties 500,000 were needed, and two contractors had established a big camp about a mile and a half from my place. While the ground was frozen I gave them permission to haul through my meadow and field, and before long a dozen or fifteen teams were back and forth twice a day, making the place much more lively than it had been. I took my little contract from these, the principal contractors, and hired a fellow to make the ties. If he had worked steadily he might just as well have made five dollars a day all the winter, or more than three times ordinary wages. In fact, some men did very much better than this. In winter, too, when the greater part of the floating day-labour population of the West is loafing in the towns, not making any wages, but most of them running up a board bill.

But my man was another impostor. He was a big, powerful fellow, a good hand with an axe or anything else when he chose. His name was Brown, he told me, raised in Kentucky, the eldest of nine sons, and, if he did say it, his father's main dependence when he was at home. He led them all. He professed the greatest anxiety to get the job and stay quietly with me on the ranche, where there would be no temptation to spend his money drinking and carousing with the boys, as he would be very likely to do, he owned, in camp. It was all chance—take him and try him. He would only be paid, in any case, for what he did. I engaged him therefore, and he gave himself away the first day. He came up in the afternoon of one day to go to work the next morning, and spent the evening figuring up the profits that were to accrue from this job, and discussing to which of various excellent uses they should be applied. With the morning's light, however, he changed his note. This was Friday, and he never started in on any big job on a Friday—he had forgotten that when he came up the day before. Unfortunately, Saturday follows Friday in the West as elsewhere, and Saturday we all know to be the last day of the week, and no day to begin any considerable piece of work. Saturday in its turn is followed

by Sunday, when by ordinance no man shall work—a commandment which such men as Mr. Brown are diligent to observe if they do neglect some of the others. So it was Monday before operations began. He made fifteen ties and stopped for the day. It was not prudent, he explained, to overdo the thing the first day. Better to work into it gradually and harden up as he went along. So gradual was this hardening process that all through the winter he never found it prudent to increase the number. He was with it all good-humoured and cheerful, and as it was only to put on another man if he got too far behind, he had my consent to stay.

This was a little before Christmas. Towards the end of January the next disaster occurred. Riding home one afternoon, I saw a huge smoke rising over a hill behind which the house should be. My heart sank as I hurried to the top, trying to make myself believe that the house was further to the right or left. The top of the hill reached, my worst fears were realised. The house was burning indeed, and, as far as I could tell at the distance, nearly consumed. When I got there, which I was not long in doing, it was down to the second log from the ground. Two men were there, Brown the tie-maker and a neighbour, but they had not got there in time to save anything except a plough and a grindstone, which were in a workshop at the back of the house, which had caught as well. The fire, I learned, had started soon after we left the house after the midday meal. A high wind was blowing, and we supposed that the front door, the lock of which had a trick of not catching once in a while when it was pulled to, had blown open, and that the wind had whisked a newspaper into the fire and then out into the room. To my certain knowledge the fire in the sitting-room was all but out when I left. There was just a single dying brand left, but of course a gale of wind blowing on it would kindle it up enough to light a newspaper. Whatever the cause, the house was gone. Not daring to leave the premises, lest the wind might change and blow a spark from the embers into the hay-stacks and burn up the hay and out-buildings as well, we spent the night in the cellar, going out from time to time to see that no further mischief was on foot. It was not a cheerful night. The money loss was considerable, and of course a number of little personal belongings that could not be replaced had gone. There was the feeling that the business was going the wrong way, and finally, it was not an agreeable piece of news to have to send to one's partner.

There was another cabin in tolerable repair on the ranche, about a quarter of a mile from the home place, and thither, as soon as an outfit could be got together again, we moved, till the longer and warmer days of early spring would allow of putting up another house. It was a dismal 'lay out.' It had not been inhabited for some years, and mountain rats had taken possession of it. For some nights it was almost impossible to sleep, as they chased each other up and down the walls and over the beds and our faces, and jumped up and down from the table with more noise than one would have thought a pack of hounds turned loose in the cabin would have made. We trapped them and shot them, and gradually thinned them out and rid ourselves of that nuisance, but the whole place was dreadfully unhandy. Our water-supply was a spring which gradually sank as winter progressed, till it was half an hour's job to dip up a bucketful, and I guess my feelings towards the cabin took the same shape as those which prompted the Dakota settler of an early day to leave his claim shanty with this notice nailed on it: 'Hundred and fifty miles to a railroad, twenty-five miles to a post-office, fifteen to school, ten miles to nearest neighbour, five hundred feet to water. God bless our home! Gone to spend winter with wife's folks.' Unfortunately the same way of escape was not open to me.

With the approach of spring I found it absolutely necessary to be closer to the stock. I had several cows requiring close attention in the stables and corrals at the home place, and moved back there into a little 'shack' which, though badly scorched, had escaped actual destruction. It was about eight feet square, and had been the milk-house. There was just room for a bed, a stove, and a small table. Brown, the tie-maker, I let go, and hired two other men who took care of themselves—camped in the timber somewhere. In these narrow quarters, which at all events were free from rats, though not from mice, as I found later, I lived for a month or so, not recking much of bodily discomfort as my mind was distracted by constant anxiety about the stock.

The ground was thawing out and a little green grass was showing up on the wettest and swamiest places, tempting weak cows to their undoing. The weaker they were, the more certain were they to venture into the swamps, reaching forward for another bite till down they would sink and, in their weak condition, be unable to extricate themselves. A long narrow gulch full of willows and springs ran the entire length of the ranche, either a mile and a half or two miles, and this had to be ridden

two or three times a day. The cattle had to have their liberty to get their living, or it would have been much easier and pleasanter to shut them up safe somewhere. When I found one down I had to pull it out with a saddle-horse, if I could; if not, to get one or both of the work-horses and drag it out, and then if possible help it up, getting smothered with slimy mud in the process. In spite of all endeavours there was some loss, and as I reflected on the frozen potatoes, the burnt house, and now the physical and mental trouble that was my daily portion, a ranche man's life did not appear to be one continual round of pleasure.

While I was pulling cattle out of the mud, I had two carpenters at work putting up another house. Before it was finished, my partner, who, absorbed in business of his own, had taken little interest in the ranche and cattle, sold his share to a young Englishman, to my exceeding joy. This gentleman when he arrived proved to be no harum-scarum youth with no idea beyond his own amusement, but a man who meant business. He came to live on the ranche and share the work and responsibility, and proved a partner indeed, making a hand from the first, though of course having everything to learn.

With his help and companionship I felt greatly cheered, and life took on a new aspect. I had a confident hope of winning out all right in the end. In the ranche itself I had a firm belief, which the past year's crop had strengthened. The freezing of the potatoes and the burning of the house were accidents not likely to recur. The weakness of the cattle I was assured on all sides was due to their not being fully 'acclimated,' and not to be looked for again. The loss sustained that spring was but the purging of the unfit from the herd, the bulk of which was still there with the weak ones eliminated.

So the neighbours argued; so I was glad to believe. Matters were looking better than they had done. Spring was well advanced; the mud holes were drying up; grass was really starting; the cattle were beginning to pick up; the house, if not entirely finished, was habitable; I was no longer fighting the battle practically single-handed, but had an educated companion of my own nationality, willing and anxious to do his part. Small wonder if for a while now the pressure was relaxed my spirits rose. But the respite was but for a while. During the summer, fall, and early winter, the stockman has little cause for anxiety as a rule. The period of danger where cattle are not fed and sheltered, but have to make their own living (a practice, by the way, now almost

universally discredited), is in the late winter and early spring months. These past, he breathes freely. Trouble, however, began again for us ahead of time. Riding the range in the fall, looking after our stock, we came upon first one and then another showing unmistakable signs of 'loco' poisoning. The 'loco' plant, if eaten in excess, produces an effect similar to opium. Any stock, horses, cattle, and sheep, are liable to eat it, where it is plentiful. If it is plentiful and grass scarce, it may be said that they are sure to eat it, but where grass is good only a few degenerates acquire the taste. A little of it does not hurt them, but when they have once got a liking for it they will eat nothing else, and soon become crazy. A 'locoed' horse will pull back and rear up when it is attempted to lead him into a stable, or refuse to cross a ditch a foot wide. When he does come, after hanging back a long while, he will make a bound as though to clear a chasm twenty feet across. Bad cases shake, tremble, totter, and reel like hopelessly intoxicated human beings. But if not very far gone, horses kept up in a stable and fed on grain soon get over the worst effects, though they are not reliable after it. If turned out again on the range, however, they go back to it.

With cattle whose living is the open range, nothing can be done. If noticed before they have had time to fall off, the best thing to do with them is to butcher them. The herb does not seem to affect the quality of the meat in any injurious way, provided the animal is fat. When they have once fallen off, 'loco'-eating stock never fatten again on the range, but wander about like so many ghosts till some severe winter puts an end to them.

There had been a few sporadic cases in the neighbourhood, but this year the number increased to something very large. The plant itself sprang up all over the country in places where it had never been known. Everybody's cattle were affected more or less, but it did seem as if we had a larger proportion than other people. It may have been that our stock, whose constitution was undeniably weak as the event proved, succumbed to the effects quicker than did hardier cattle.

At the time, however, as far as I can remember, the full significance of the discovery did not dawn on us. The cattle were fat and looked well, and having had no experience of the disorder, though we had often heard of it, I imagine we hoped it might pass off. A memory comes to my mind, thinking this over, which gave me a good laugh at that time.

We selected an old cow who had not brought us a calf that

year, and who, we fancied, had a touch of 'the weed,' as a fit candidate for the butcher's block. We got her home, corralled her for the night, and next day started with her for a neighbour's not far distant who was to kill and dress her for us. On the way there A., by which letter I shall designate my partner for the remainder of this paper, was riding our best cow-horse, and, as I told him, had to do the running if she gave trouble, as one animal by itself is almost sure to do. I was riding an old work-horse and could not pretend to do anything on him but follow along behind. Our way led down the long narrow gulch mentioned before, and pretty soon the old girl began to dodge in among the willows and swamps, and finally took up a trail on the steep bank opposite, which led through a quaking asp thicket. A. was close behind her on the pony—an animal, by the way, for which no one would give sixpence to ride along the road, but which behind a cow was completely transformed. Wherever the cow went he was going, and if the rider could not go too, that was his, the rider's, look-out, and none of the pony's. The trail, hardly a foot wide, as cows' trails are, passed in one place between two good stout quaking asp saplings from six to eight inches through. Between them rushed the old cow, followed closely by the resolute pony, rasping one or both of his rider's legs as he squeezed through. He headed her off as soon as they reached open ground, and down the bank she came headlong, wallowed across the gulch, disregarding my efforts to turn her, and then, as A. caught up with her again, wheeled sharply and took her old tracks across the gulch for the third time and up the trail again, the pony following. Through the gap she fled once more, the pony too, with precisely the same result to the rider. My good friend A. had no inclination for the strong language so common in the West, but I fancy on this occasion he fell from grace. I was not near enough to hear his remarks, but I saw his lips move, and from his expression I judged him to be saying something besides his prayers.

The rest of the year was uneventful. We had a very fair crop, but not the 'bumper' one of the year before. In the spring, however, of the ensuing year, we had no reason to complain of lack of incident. With the break-up and spring storms the cattle fell every way. It was impossible to tell from looking at them which was to be the next victim. Often those that looked to be in the best order were the very ones to turn up their toes. The 'loco' in their systems had 'undermined their constitutions,' as an old neighbour explained, and I guess his diagnosis was right.

It seems to me, looking back to it, as if those that didn't actually die spent their time in getting mired down. If A. and I undertook to do anything, either someone would happen along and call out, 'There's a cow down about a quarter up the gulch,' or before we started in we would conclude one of us had better go and see if anything was down and that would settle it. Or if we were going anywhere, and had perhaps 'slicked up' a little, we were sure to have to plunge knee deep into mud and lift and pull and haul on some emaciated old sister whose appetite for green grass had been stronger than her judgment; then perhaps, after she had been rescued and she stood trembling and dripping on the edge of the morass, a notion would strike her that we were the cause of all her misery, and she would make a feeble tottering charge at us and go down again. The loss that year was really formidable, exceeding the increase, and we felt that a change in our procedure must be made if only we could find out what or how.

Slowly the season advanced, the casualties became fewer, and at length with grass fairly started we drove out our depleted herd, thankful to be rid for the present of what had become a soul-depressing incubus.

Other matters of a more cheerful nature now occupied our attention. Two sisters of the writer's were on their way to make a trial of ranche life for a year or so, and we had to get ready for them. The house needed some alterations, and any amount of cleaning up inside and out had to be done. We were a good deal behind with our work, and it was only by working double tides that we were anything like ready for them. At last the day, or rather night, arrived on which I was to go to meet them. Our new railroad had been running a year, but the only passenger train that had compassion on our insignificance stopped somewhere in the small hours of the night, and A. has to this day an absurd story of how I kept him awake till past midnight ransacking my old duds to get an outfit together fit to make a half-way decent appearance in, and then woke him from a fitful doze to button that bachelor ranche man's stand-by, a celluloid collar.

With their arrival we began to lead a more civilised life, leaving the savagery of 'backing' behind. The place itself, as I said, had many natural advantages, and looking round the pretty tasteful sitting-room the ladies had fixed up, the memory of the rat-haunted cabin and the time in the milk-house seemed like a bad dream.

Under vastly improved social conditions the summer progressed. The ladies, with the enthusiasm of new hands, took great interest in everything, and soon relieved us of all trouble about the meals. They also made butter—very excellent butter it was; but I am reminded that one churning was not entirely successful. It came about in this way. The habit was to save the cream in the churn itself, which was a stone one. This was kept in the milk-house, and on one occasion the evening's skimming was entrusted to a tenderfoot English boy who was staying with us, and he, in accordance with his usual practice of never doing right what could be done wrong, dumped, to use a word much in vogue in these days, the cream into the vessel and neglected to replace the lid. This fact, in spite of his vehement denial, is established by the unimpeachable testimony of a witness who found the churn lidless when the morning contribution was taken in. This day was churning day, and I undertook the job myself. Ours was an old-fashioned dash churn, and I pounded up and down, an everlasting time too I recollect, till butter came. Here it was at last, a fine lot, eight or nine pounds at a guess. Lifting it out of the churn, something sticking up in it that certainly was not butter caught my eye. It was a piece of furry skin. Looking closer, innumerable other fragments were apparent, greater and smaller, mixed through the mass in a hideous amalgam. *Horresco referens*. Some of these I was able to identify. They were pieces of mice, heads, tails, ears, feet, all in fact *propria quæ maribus*! How many had been churned up was a nice question which none of us had the patience or skill to determine, but the number was conservatively estimated at six.

That boy! I suppose a longer and certainly more amusing paper than this could be written with him as the subject. How he practised 'roping' in our corral and caught a wild steer of a neighbour's, and then could not get the rope off again, and how the animal got out rope and all, and was found later still dragging it to the astonishment and dissatisfaction of its owner; how he went for a load of wood for us, and finding himself in some scrape with his team, where a little patience and coolness would have saved the situation, got 'rattled,' and cut the harness and came home congratulating himself on his presence of mind; how on one occasion, when running a bunch of horses, emulating what used in an earlier day to be a cowboy practice, he fired a shot meaning to turn the leader, and killed him instead; how at the railroad he let a team get away from him, with the consequence that

they ran the waggon tongue through a mule tied to a hitching-post, and his employer had the mule to pay for—in these, and similar exploits surely is material that deserves more than an allusion. But space—magazine space, at all events—is not limitless, and I pass him by to bring this tale of woe to its conclusion.

That summer was hot and dry, and the crop was almost a failure. Instead of having, as we had hoped and worked for, more feed than heretofore, there was less, much less. The ranche itself was going back on us now, it seemed. Nor were the cattle doing any good, summer though it was. The railroad, which had been expected to work such wonders in our favour, had so far proved a detriment. It had brought into the country a flood of undesirable settlement. In every gulch and on every little flat where the stock had been accustomed to range was a cabin and a dog, and if there was a spring it had been fenced in. All stockmen oppose the settling up of a country, and this complaint may be taken for the growl of prejudice. But *bonâ fide* settlers are not in the same category as these I speak of. In the great majority of instances they were nothing but timber thieves, pretending to take up land under the liberal laws of the United States as homesteads, cutting the timber off and selling it to some saw-mill, and then leaving it.

In a few weeks after the railroad was in operation there were fourteen saw-mills, all within a few miles of one another, cutting and slashing the pine and spruce forests; and the incalculable damage they and others like them have done, not only in this case but through the length and breadth of the mountains, is beginning to be appreciated by the public as it was long ago by experts.

But I must not digress. With their range thus curtailed the stock were wandering dismally round, breaking in on the crop in desperation, and prospects for the winter were worse than ever. As far as I remember, however, the actual loss the next spring was less than formerly, but the herd was in wretched condition. There was hardly any increase; the young stock were not growing nor the mature ones fattening. They were absolutely unprofitable and absolutely unsaleable. Arguing that one bad season would hardly be followed by a second, we made an almost Titanic effort to raise food enough for the entire herd next winter, renting another ranche for the purpose. But black fate pursued us. The summer was drier than ever before known, and from the greater part we got absolutely nothing.

We made up our minds that we were beaten—better for us if we had accepted defeat sooner—and began to make arrangements for a move the next spring. There was a country about one hundred and fifty miles west, on the other side of the range, which we heard a good account of, and one of us went over that fall to spy out the land. The intention was for both of us to move over there if the report was favourable, but circumstances changed our plans. Ultimately I sold my attenuated interest to A., who took the stock over next spring and located there. On a splendid range they soon began to gain, and I am thankful to say that, after his arduous breaking in, he has been reasonably successful.

J. R. E. SUMNER.

In Praise of Richard Harrys.

SAVE in the writings of some Elizabethan antiquaries, little record is to be found in English literature of the name of Richard Harrys. It has not even been inscribed in that great book of fame, the *Dictionary of National Biography*. Yet I think the Irish fruiterer to King Henry VIII. deserves a humble place, at least, among the famous men of the earlier part of the sixteenth century. It may be said of him that he found England a wilderness, and made a considerable part of it a rich and pleasant garden.

The land was then an expanse of green desolation, overrun with sheep. As Camden said, these animals, that used to be gentle and timid, had grown so wild and ravenous that they devoured men, and laid waste fields, homesteads, and towns. This may appear an extraordinary fact in natural history, but it admits of quite a simple explanation. Landowners, having discovered that the rearing of sheep was more easy and profitable than tillage, owing to the expansion of the wool trade, usurped the common lands, evicted their tenants, and converted their estates into immense pasture-grounds. Farms, churches, and hamlets disappeared in the waste of verdure; and England was for ever bereft of that numerous class of peasant farmers who, in France and other foreign States, have done much towards the solution of the agricultural problem. It has been calculated that, out of a population of five millions, six hundred and seventy thousand persons were left without employment.

While the poor starved, the rich lived largely on Flemish and French produce. But the King's fruiterer could not see why England should not have at least orchards of her own, if not corn-fields. In the year when the lesser monasteries were suppressed, and the homeless peasants in the poorer districts rose in formidable insurrection, he did the little that in him lay towards founding that period of comparative prosperity and internal peace which culminated in the latter part of Queen Elizabeth's reign. Of greater impor-

tance, perhaps, than his undertaking in itself was the fact that its wonderful success incited men to exploit in other ways the fertility of the soil, and so brought back more people to the land. Harrys's achievement is related in the quaintest manner by William Lambarde, in *A Perambulation of Kent*, a work which, composed in 1570, has the distinction not only of being the first of our county histories published, but of still remaining one of the most interesting and best written. The story occurs in a description of Tenham parish, which is worth citing :

'Heere have wee, not onely the most dainty piece of all our Shyre, but such a Singularitie as the whole Brittish Iland is not able to patterne. The Ile of Thanet, and those Easterne parts, are the Grayner ; the Weald was the Wood ; Rumney Marsh is the Medow plot ; the Northdownes towards the Thamyse be the Conygarthe, or Warreine ; and this Tenham, with thirty other parishes (lying on each side this porte way, and extending from Raynham to Blean Wood), bee the Cherrie gardein and Apple orcharde of Kent.

'But, as this at Tenham is the parent of all the rest, and from whome they have drawen the good iuice of all their pleasant fruite : So is it also the most large, delightsome, and beautifull of them. In which respect you may phantasie that you now see *Hesperidum Hortos* ; if not where Hercules founde the golden apples (which is reckoned for one of his Heroical labours) yet where our honest patriote Richard Harrys (Fruiterer to King Henrie the 8.) planted by his great coste and rare industrie, the sweete Cherry, the temperate Pipyn, and the golden Renate. For this man, seeing that this Realme (which wanted neither the favour of the Sunne, nor the fat of the Soile, meete for the making of good apples) was nevertheless served chiefly with that Fruit from forrein Regions abroad, by reason that (as Vergil saide), *Pomaeque degenerant sucos oblita priores* ; and those plantes which our auncestors had brought hither out of Normandie had lost their native verdour, whether you did eate their substance or drink their iuice, which we call Cyder, he (I say) about the yeere of our Lord Christ 1533, obtained 105 acres of good ground in Tenham, then called the Brennet, which he divided into ten parcels, and with great care, good choise, and no small labour and cost, brought plantes from beyonde the Seas, and furnished this ground with them, so beautifully as they not onely stand in most right line, but seeme to be of one sorte, shape, and fashion, as if they had been thorow one Mould, or wrought by one and the same patterne.'

Seven years after the planting of the New Garden, as it was called, £1,000 worth of cherries was produced from thirty-two acres of the land. Rumours of such extraordinary crops created an interest in the growing of fruit in the remotest parts of England; and country gentlemen, having obtained grafts from Tenham, were soon able to say to their friends—

‘ You shall see mine orchard, where, in an arbour,
We will eat a last year’s pippin of my own grafting,’

as Justice Shallow, with the honest pride of a man who was at least a successful gardener, remarked to Falstaff. The New Garden was then what John Webster said all fine works of translation were—a paradise into which were gathered the treasures of the world. Apple grafts from France, cherry and pear grafts of various sorts from the Low Countries flourished there, and probably the new plum trees from Italy, which were introduced about the same time. So skilfully were the trees selected and planted that the first foreigner to write on fruit-growing in England, Milton’s versatile friend from Poland, Hartlib, said that our cherries, apples, and pears were still the best of any, although it seemed to him that we had lost somewhat of the art of orcharding since the days of Harrys.

Harrys’s actions, truly, smell sweet and blossom in the dust. What a glorious monument he now has in the orchards extending from Kent far into the Midlands and the West Country! On a fine day in spring the prospect from Boughton Hill, four miles west of Canterbury, over the parishes mentioned by Lambarde, from Blean in the hollow southward, to Rainham westward by the Medway, and Tenham northward by the Swale, is still one of the fairest and goodliest in the Kingdom. A grey church tower and some dark red roofs, showing above the mass of bloom, mark the site of the villages, while, were it not for their tall, white-capped oast-houses, many of the old farmsteads scattered in between would be hidden by the flowers of their fruit groves. So bleak by contrast seem the bare brown fields where young hop-shoots are beginning to twine about the bristling poles, that one regrets that Kentish farmers should have turned so many of their orchards into hop-grounds in 1552, only nineteen years after Harrys had made Northern Kent into a garden as beautiful almost in summer and autumn, when the foliage is hung with ripe fruit, as it is when dressed with the pure blossom in spring.

Sad to say, the exquisite picturesqueness of the cherry-gardens

and apple-yards of England will probably soon become a thing to be remembered more often than enjoyed. The scientific horticulturist is intent on despoiling the work of Richard Harrys of much of its charm. At present a dewy, sweet-smelling close of cherry-trees on a fair April morning is the loveliest spot under heaven. All the beauty dispersed about the countryside is collected within its narrow bound. The trees themselves, in the studied order of their arrangement and the bright disarray of their boughs, form the centre of the picture. Trailing first across the blue sky a few single sprays, delicate, milk-white, and of the perfection of a cameo, they then weave below a roof of scented bloom, where the flowers, after hanging in clusters and waving lines around, rise in large white rods into the cloud of blossom above. The man of science will not, of course, impair the trees; indeed, he wishes incidentally to make them more splendidly ornamental by increasing their fruitfulness. Whether he has any just cause of quarrel with the birds that sing so prettily in the boughs and try to earn a right to a little of the fruit in summer by eating the insects on the trees in spring, is not yet decided; and I am not sure if he, at present, intends to remove the tall leafing hedge that makes a most admirable frame to the picture. But then, when a man begins to judge the value of everything from a coldly scientific standpoint, nothing is really safe from his attack. And, at any rate, the landscape painter will soon find the English orchard a difficult subject for his brush; for, in place of the verdurous lawn which, as it stretches splashed with sunshine and shadows between the trees, now affords pasturage for some very woolly sheep, and by its park-like aspect softens and completes the general beauty of the scene, he will have to get the best colour-effects he can from a patch of raw brown earth. Grass, says the scientific horticulturist, is bad for the fruit-trees under which it grows, and grass must disappear. Perhaps the orchard of the future will be a dismal tract of bare ground, studded with whitewashed trees, and enclosed in patent iron railings. Oh, the conquests of science!

In the meantime, however, instead of lamenting an inevitable change, we ought rather to rejoice that in our days so much of Richard Harrys's work as a landscape gardener on a magnificent scale has survived an epoch of utilitarian change. God having made the country, and man the town, the devil, it is said, is erecting the suburbs. But fine traditions in building linger on in the inland hamlets and villages of Kent, where the mellow tints of the brickwork and tiling still help to carry out the admirable colour-

scheme unconsciously adopted by the King's fruiterer when he entered upon his great undertaking. In the wear and the vicissitudes of four centuries his work has become only more beautiful, and, happily, the surrounding land has grown more into harmony with it. The vast sheep-walks of the Tudor lords are now parcelled out into parks and farms; the expansion of our shipbuilding trade in the age of wooden hulls covered the land with forest-trees which have not entirely disappeared; in fact, owing to the fall in the price of wheat, hill slopes that were once tilled are now wooded heights; and although, for the same reason, grass is growing upon many fields that used to shine with a golden light under the autumnal sun, yet the innumerable orchards that Richard Harrys founded or re-established remain to diversify and enhance the beauty of the English landscape.

EDWARD WRIGHT.

The Philanthropist and the Unit.

‘MISS SPENCER, sir.’

‘Miss Spencer! I don’t know anything about Miss Spencer.’

Graham Denzil turned in his chair, his brows drawn together impatiently; Prout, his butler, stood by the door, calmly expectant.

‘What does she want?’ inquired Denzil, after a pause.

‘I don’t know, sir. I told her I thought you was engaged, and she seemed very disappointed—very disappointed indeed, sir.’

‘If you told her I was engaged what is she waiting for?’

‘She said if you knew that she had come so far, and that her case was so urgent, perhaps you would see her, sir.’

‘Well, let her come in,’ said the philanthropist, after a moment’s frowning reflection. ‘I may as well see her and have done with it. Confound these charitable women,’ he muttered to himself as the servant withdrew, ‘they always will insist on beginning at the wrong end. They cannot realise that it is waste of time to come to me about individual cases. But I don’t suppose I shall ever make this good creature understand.’

He turned sharply towards the door as it was thrown open for the second time—a formidable looking man, and one whom it would take some courage to attack on a trifling matter. At forty-five Denzil had come to be recognised as a social power; but though he devoted energies, wealth, and time exclusively to the amelioration of a certain section of the human race, he was no milk-and-water philanthropist, easily moved, or imposed on with impunity.

The lines of his strong dark face were harsh enough as the newcomer advanced; he glanced at her keenly.

A little person—a very little person—came forward with faltering steps, and, instead of taking possession of the chair towards which Denzil, rising with a formal bow, had motioned her, walked right up to his table, and extended a small shaking hand,

fixing him the while with her large terrified eyes. The girl—indeed, she looked scarcely more than a child—was evidently dizzy with fright; her pretty face was pale, her breath came in gasps, and she essayed in vain to speak.

Denzil insensibly relaxed as he shook the hand so unexpectedly stretched out to him; then he pointed to the chair a second time, and said very kindly:

‘Sit down, and tell me what I can do for you.’

She backed to the chair and sat down, still keeping her eyes on his face. Denzil reseated himself and pretended to be busy with his papers for a moment or two, in order to give her time to regain her self-possession; then he turned to her and said gently:

‘How can I help you?’

‘I want an appointment,’ blurted out the little creature abruptly.

Graham smiled.

‘That is rather vague, isn’t it? What kind of appointment?’

‘Perhaps I ought to say situation,’ said Miss Spencer meekly.

She looked about eighteen, and had a round soft baby face, with big hazel eyes. Her hair, nut-brown in colour, appeared to curl naturally; she was neatly, even prettily clad in deep mourning. The material of her dress, however, was too light for the season, and the little boot which protruded from beneath her skirt was very, very muddy.

The dawning impatience of which Denzil had been conscious as she revealed her business died away at sight of the little muddy boot.

‘Governess, I suppose?’ he inquired, with a certain compassion.

‘I don’t mind at all,’ returned the girl, regaining courage all at once, and speaking fluently and confidentially. ‘Governess, or companion, or secretary, or amanuensis.’

Denzil smiled again.

‘I wonder,’ he said, looking at her with an unwonted twinkle in his eye; ‘I wonder what is the difference between a secretary and an amanuensis? Do you know, I am afraid you have come to the wrong person: My work lies in quite a different direction. If I should hear of an opening for you in any of the capacities you mention, I shall bear you in mind; but meanwhile hadn’t you better try an agency?’

‘I have tried several agencies,’ returned Miss Spencer, with a trembling lip, ‘but they all want money down.’

'And there is not much of that going, I suppose?' hinted the philanthropist.

'I have hardly any left,' faltered the little creature, opening her eyes very wide, and looking unconsciously piteous.

'Friends in London?' queried Denzil.

'No; I don't know anybody except Mr. —,' naming a certain clergyman. 'Mr. Morpeth gave me a letter of introduction to him, but he said he didn't think he could help me.'

'And who is Mr. Morpeth?'

'Oh, he is our vicar down at Pengwynnock. He is almost the only friend I have in the world; it was he who told me to come to you.'

'Indeed!' said Denzil somewhat drily. 'I have not the pleasure of his acquaintance, and don't quite know why he should have selected me for this honour.'

He was beginning to feel irritated again; the girl sat there as though she intended to remain all the morning. He saw no possibility of helping her, yet both she and her reverend adviser appeared to think she might justly claim his assistance.

'He said—he said,' pursued Miss Spencer in somewhat tremulous tones, 'that he knew you by name as one associated with good works, and that if I—if I found myself in straits I was to go to you, and to tell you from an old man—meaning himself—that sometimes prevention is better than cure. I'm sure I don't know what he meant by that,' she added.

Denzil leaned suddenly forward, gazing at her keenly, and she looked back at him with her big child's eyes. She had evidently spoken the truth. She knew nothing of the old man's meaning; but Denzil knew, and after a moment he threw himself back in his chair again and considered.

The old clergyman of this remote Cornish parish had touched the right chord. By those few words he had put forward his *protégée's* claim for protection and help in a manner not to be disregarded. Graham Denzil spent his life in endeavouring to succour distressed womanhood—womanhood of a very different type. It was his custom, moreover, to dispense charity to masses, not individuals; but he now felt himself unaccountably interested in this unit, belonging though she did to a class with which he had hitherto had no dealings. How many girls came to London with just the same equipment as this one—a pretty face, an empty pocket, groundless confidence, absolute ignorance of the world. Poor little helpless straws, by what fierce winds were they caught

up, on what dark tides did they drift away! If it was his duty to rescue, was not the duty more paramount when it was possible to preserve?

'Why did you come to London, child?' he asked abruptly.

'I had to do something,' said Miss Spencer. 'Poor mamma was ill for such a long time, and when she died there were only a few pounds left, and so I thought it was much better to be on the spot—there was no opening for me at Pengwynnock, and I was tired of advertising. Mr. Morpeth didn't want me to come, but I—well, I didn't know what else to do.'

'You have come to the wrong person, as I told you; but I will see what I can do. Now, let us hear what are your qualifications. I suppose you have been well educated?'

'Oh, yes; I went to a very good school. Miss Winterberry's school, you know—'

'I suppose you are up in all the 'ologies,' he remarked, as she paused.

'Well, I was first in geology,' she cried, with sparkling eyes; 'and I learnt the Greek roots.'

'Very practical, indeed,' said Denzil. 'What about French?'

'Grammatical French,' she said, 'not conversational.'

'People rather expect conversational French now, I'm afraid; so many French girls come over.'

'Ah, but French girls are not reliable,' said Miss Spencer, looking extremely wise. 'Miss Winterberry said she would not have a French girl about the place for the world.'

'Some people have a foolish prejudice in favour of learning French from a native on account of the accent,' murmured Denzil. 'I wonder what your accent is like.'

'Miss Winterberry said I had a very good accent,' returned the girl in rather a wounded tone.

'Doubtless. German? No German. Music?'

'I am not a performer,' announced Miss Spencer in a perfectly satisfied tone, which signified that she could have been if she had chosen.

'H'm. Well, now with regard to a possible secretaryship; do you know anything of shorthand?'

'I could soon learn.'

'Yes, like the man who was asked if he could play the violin. Can you use a typewriter?'

'I never had anything to do with such things,' she responded, with dignity. 'I never thought I should have to earn my living.'

'I daresay you didn't, poor little soul!' cried he; then, with a kind of outburst of wondering wrath, 'but what was everybody thinking about—what did they suppose was to become of you?'

'Papa was manager of the bank,' returned the girl; 'nobody ever thought he was going to die.'

'Of course not. But people do occasionally die, don't they? And when a man makes no provision for his family the widow is likely to suffer; and when the principal on which she has been living is all gone, the orphan is thrown upon the world.'

He got up and began to pace about the room impatiently. And this was but a poor unit—one of many—one of many!

Miss Spencer, resenting this digression from the subject under discussion, and being, moreover, disposed to think his strictures unwarrantable, brought him back to the point by announcing, with an offended air, 'I write a very good hand.'

'Come, that's something,' cried he, wheeling round. 'Let me see a sample of it. Write your name and address on that sheet of paper.'

She pulled off her glove, revealing a chubby baby hand, rather red, as, in the opinion of Anatole France, it behoves the hands of young girls to be, and with a chilblain on the little finger.

She wrote her name—'Miss Lucy Spencer'—in a firm, bold, clear hand, of the type exemplified in 'Civil Service' copybooks. The address indicated a locality quite respectable, as Denzil noted with satisfaction, but also inconveniently remote. He remembered the muddy boots, and wondered if she had trudged all the way.

'Now I am going to give you a piece of advice,' he said seriously. 'Go back to Pengwynnock, at least for the present, until some employment is found for you. I will do the best I can; I will speak to two or three people who may perhaps be able to help you. But meanwhile it is perfectly insane for a child like you to be living alone in London—'

'I couldn't possibly go back,' interrupted Lucy hotly. 'Something is sure to turn up if I remain on the spot, but if I go away—and the journey is so expensive, too! It would take nearly all my money,' she added, with a sudden change from wrath to piteousness.

'I will find the money,' said Denzil kindly; 'as a loan, I mean, of course,' he added, seeing the girl flush to the roots of her hair.

'I couldn't possibly accept it,' she returned quickly. 'I have never borrowed money in my life; and I am certainly not going to

begin by borrowing money from a stranger and a gentleman. Mamma always told me that it was only very low sort of girls who put themselves under obligations to gentlemen.'

She held her head high, and spoke with so ridiculous an air of worldly wisdom that Graham did not know whether to be more amused or irritated.

'I see you have been taught how to take care of yourself,' he remarked ironically.

'Of course, I have to, now that I am obliged to make my own way in the world.'

'Quite right. Better be on your guard; it is not always easy to distinguish friends from foes. Now, as I am a very busy man, Miss Spencer, I am afraid I can't spare any more time. I will make a note of your address and bear your case in mind. If nothing *should* turn up, and you find yourself in any unpleasant predicament, you had better come to me again.'

He spoke with a final air, walking towards the door as though to open it for her. Lucy felt herself dismissed, and rose, looking somewhat crestfallen. Her eyes wandered round the room, taking note of the books, the piles of paper, the open tin cases full of documents. A sudden inspiration came to her. 'I suppose you don't want a secretary?' she said.

Now, it was part of Graham Denzil's scheme of life to perform most of his work with his own hand. When the press of business was very great he did occasionally call in the aid of a shorthand writer; but he had never employed any permanent amanuensis. He paused for a moment, gazing compassionately at the forlorn little figure; and then the message of the old Cornish parson recurred to him: Prevention is better than cure. Why not give the girl a chance—test her capabilities for a few weeks until something more practicable might, as she expressed it, 'turn up'?

He made the suggestion in a few words; the manner in which she received his communication filling him with the same sense of mingled irritation and amusement as that of which he had before been conscious.

The meek little suppliant disappeared; it was now evidently Lucy's object to appear, above all things, practical—quite a woman of business, in fact.

Yes, she would be very glad to undertake the appointment, even though it was but a temporary one. When was she to enter on her duties? The terms—oh, yes, the terms were quite satisfactory. (Graham had, in fact, after a rapid mental calculation, named a

sum which, as he reckoned, would amply suffice for her actual needs.)

The mite of a hand was again extended with a complacent air, and the little creature turned in the doorway to remark: 'I am sure we shall get on very well.'

'I hope we shall,' said Denzil; and then he closed the door, and went back to his writing-table, and laughed—but somewhat ruefully.

On the next day, at eleven o'clock, the new secretary arrived. She was, as before, pale with nervousness, and the hand which she held out was icy cold.

'Don't be frightened,' said Denzil encouragingly; 'your duties will not be very arduous.'

But Miss Spencer declared—albeit in quavering tones—that she was not in the least frightened, and was quite ready for her work; whereupon Graham did, for a moment, look really alarming.

Perhaps he felt that if she wasn't nervous she ought to be. He, on his part, was making a very great effort.

'Here are six notes,' he said rather drily, as he pushed a little pile of papers towards her. 'In answering the first three you will say, in each case, that I regret being unable to comply with the writer's request. In two of the others—but perhaps you had better dispose of these three first. You will find writing materials there.'

Another table had been set forth, facing his own, and Miss Lucy Spencer took her seat, with a somewhat lugubrious air. She opened first one note and then another, frowned, meditated, looked appealingly towards her employer, but, receiving no response from that quarter, devoted herself with a sigh to her task. Denzil, feigning unconsciousness of these proceedings, continued to read the document with which he had been engaged when she entered.

Presently—'I've done these,' came in a small voice from the other side of the room.

'You have been very quick. Bring them to me.'

Elated at his commendation she crossed the room with an airy tread, and spread out the notes before him. On all three the same legend was set forth: 'Mr. Denzil regrets that he cannot comply with the writer's request.'

'I'm afraid that won't do,' said he, suppressing a smile. 'You don't give the name of the person you are writing to; and you must contrive to put it a little more civilly than that.'

'But you didn't tell me to say the names,' protested she 'and how am I to put it more civilly?'

Tears were evidently not far off; his heart smote him.

'I think you had better write some letters from dictation first,' he said; 'then you will get into the way of it. You have been accustomed to write from dictation?'

Oh, yes, Lucy said; she had often written from dictation at school.

She wrote very quickly, and everything went quite smoothly until, at the end of half-an-hour or so, Denzil inspected the result of her labours.

'My dear child!' he exclaimed involuntarily; and then came what seemed to Lucy a fearful pause. 'How do you spell vicinity?' he went on.

'Aren't there two s's?' queried Lucy tremulously.

'And here, again, "moreover," "advisable." And what about the punctuation? You've run all the sentences into each other.'

'You didn't tell me the stops,' returned Lucy, tearfully. 'Miss Winterberry always gave out the stops.'

She had turned as white as a sheet once more, and her eyes seemed ready to start from her head.

'Well, it's no great matter, after all,' said Denzil soothingly. 'I dare say it was as much my fault as yours. You see I am new to this business, too. I'll announce the stops in future, and when you come to any alarming big word you had better ask me how to spell it.'

Miss Spencer trotted back meekly to her desk, and Denzil, walking up and down the room, recommenced his dictation. He was beginning to feel quite satisfied with this new mode of procedure, when a question from Lucy suddenly disconcerted him.

'How do you spell "italicise"?' she inquired.

'Italicise?' he echoed, gazing at her blankly.

'Yes; you said, "Italicise this."'

'But you don't mean to say you've been writing—— Just let me see that note, Miss Spencer.'

Up got Lucy, with a mystified face, but nevertheless with a certain air of conscious rectitude.

Denzil burst into a fit of laughter as she placed the document in his hands.

'You really must excuse me,' he said, endeavouring to regain his gravity; 'it is too comical. I never could have imagined——'

'But what is wrong?' gasped the girl.

'I'll explain. You see this sentence here? "*Do you consider his course advisable query.*" And here, again: "*The 'Times' of*

June 22 justly observes quotation marks." And now : " *The great cruz italis* "—you hadn't got any farther, on account of the spelling difficulty.'

He laughed again ; and then, seeing that she was crimson with mortification, and apparently quite at sea as to the nature of her error, he became serious, and entered into a minute and painstaking explanation.

' Did you not yourself ask me to dictate the stops ? ' he said, in conclusion, noticing that she seemed more aggrieved than penitent.

' You do it quite differently to Miss Winterberry,' she said. ' Of course, if you gave them out like Miss Winterberry—'

' Well, I am willing to take an indirect lesson from Miss Winterberry,' returned he, drawing the disputed note towards him and scribbling upon it. ' What do you call that, for instance ? '

' Miss Winterberry always said " Question mark. " '

' And these ? '

' Miss Winterberry never said anything but " Inverted commas. " '

' I see ; I was wrong in dubbing them " Quotation marks. " And now, when I wish to emphasise a word—like this—how am I to let you know my meaning ? '

' You must say " Underline, " ' announced Lucy, with a superior air.

' I'll bear it in mind. Well, I think we have worked enough for to-day ; to-morrow, no doubt, everything will go well. Now you had better go home—take the 'bus ; there is no need for you to tire yourself to death. I hope soon to hear of something that may suit you. Meanwhile, remember all the good advice that anyone has ever given you. Be very prudent, don't make friends with strangers, don't go out after dark.'

Lucy was very much offended at what she evidently considered superfluous counsel, and endeavoured to show it by the stateliness with which she said ' Good-bye,' and walked across the room ; but, as Denzil was occupied in tearing up and consigning to the wastepaper basket her epistolary efforts of the morning, it is possible that her attitude escaped him.

After many abortive attempts, much forbearance and good will on Denzil's part, and somewhat fitful zeal on Lucy's, the pair got into the way of working tolerably well together.

Graham, keeping a wary eye fixed upon the little scribe and noting when she seemed to falter, immediately spelt the word which might be supposed to puzzle her ; he also indicated the punctuation, after the manner prescribed by Miss Winterberry, and in a

tone so absolutely unlike that which he employed for the mere wording of his sentences that there could be no possibility of Miss Spencer's making mistakes. Thus a full stop was enunciated in the deepest bass, while 'inverted commas' were jerked out in an imperative falsetto.

Now and then, nevertheless, a difference of opinion arose between them. When Lucy, for instance, adorned the page with a number of neat but quite unnecessary commas, her plea that she considered it advisable to introduce one after every six or seven words appeared to him unsatisfactory. Again, that spelling question was one which caused much friction; Miss Spencer's assurances that no fault had hitherto been found with her orthography quite failing to convince Graham.

On one occasion, indeed, he lost patience. '*Loose* no time!' he ejaculated. 'Cannot you even manage to spell a word of four letters?'

Miss Spencer looked up in astonishment.

'Do you not know that there are not two o's in *lose*? You have written *loose*.'

'I thought there were two s's in *loose*,' returned she, with dignity.

'There are not two s's in *loose* any more than there are in *goose*,' retorted Denzil, adding with a good-humoured laugh, as he met her surprised gaze, 'but sometimes a little goose may have two very big i's. That was a joke,' he remarked after a pause, during which Lucy had stared at him in utter bewilderment—'I am alluding to *your* eyes.'

Lucy walked back to her chair in silence, took another sheet of paper, and wrote the note over again. She was evidently much affronted, though whether by the jest itself or by the reprimand which had preceded it, Denzil could not discover.

'Has it ever occurred to you,' he inquired presently, in a graver tone, 'that you might try to use your brains a little?'

'I never knew I was so stupid,' replied Lucy, with sulky stateliness.

'Not exactly stupid,' he returned coolly, 'but sometimes extremely silly, and very often careless. When, for instance, I have told you a thing, not once but several times, how is it that you can never remember it?'

'I suppose,' answered Miss Spencer, in an aggrieved tone, 'I suppose because I don't think.'

'Precisely; but isn't it about time you should begin to think?'

Has it ever occurred to you that you might try to improve yourself? Education is seldom complete at eighteen, and yours has certainly been defective. Still, after all, you *have* got brains; you couldn't have been first in—what was it? Geology?—if you hadn't brains. Miss Winterberry was probably too much occupied in teaching you geology to pay attention to spelling; but I assure you good spelling is desirable—particularly in a secretary. I will give you a book which will help you, I fancy. It deals with orthography, punctuation, and all such matters; the rules are set forth very clearly, and altogether it should be of great use to you.'

'Thank you,' said Lucy distantly. 'If you will give me the name of the book I will buy it for myself.'

His lip tightened for a moment, but he made no remark. He wrote out the title of the book in question and gave it to her; and work proceeded for the rest of the morning without any conversation except what was absolutely necessary.

It was evident that Miss Spencer considered herself ill-used. She had, in fact, received Denzil's little lecture in precisely the same spirit as that in which, no doubt, she had unwillingly hearkened to Miss Winterberry's scoldings in days gone by. To mark her displeasure further she did not shake hands with him on leaving, but passed him with a regal bow.

'Perverse little simpleton!' he ejaculated, as the door closed behind her; and then he wondered to himself why he did not wash his hands of her. He did not in the least require her services; in fact, she wasted a great deal of his time and gave him an infinity of trouble. The labour which it cost him, when communicating with his correspondents through her, so to convey his meaning that the recipient of the letter should understand, while she herself, poor little innocent, should remain in happy ignorance—was in itself considerable. She was, of course, unconscious of this. Nevertheless, it seemed curious that she should have no perception of his forbearance and generosity. In what evil part she had taken his harmless little joke! and yet it had been a very good joke. Denzil dwelt on it with the complacency which a really clever man sometimes bestows on a jest which would make a person of average intellect blush.

'Two very big i's'! Would it have been better, he wondered, if he had said 'capital i's'? And then he began to think of the eyes in question, and of the baby face, and the chubby hand so resolutely withheld from him to-day. After all, poor babe, he must not be too hard.

Next morning, however, when Miss Spencer arrived, still in a state of dudgeon, his sense of exasperation returned. Miss Spencer's lapses were, in consequence, corrected with dry brevity; her wandering attention was recalled from time to time with a certain asperity, and the culminating point was reached when, on reading aloud at Denzil's request a letter which she had just written, she allowed herself to fall into an error of pronunciation which had already been frequently pointed out to her.

'How often must I tell you that "safety" is not a trisyllable? I must beg you to be more careful. This will really never do.'

Thereupon Lucy threw down her pen and jumped up.

'Indeed it won't do!' she cried passionately; 'I can see that for myself. Nothing is right. You are always finding fault with me. I can't stand it any more!'

She had picked up her gloves, and now, buttoning her jacket with trembling fingers, made for the door.

'Come back, Miss Spencer!' said Denzil. He did not raise his voice, but something in its tone arrested her. As she turned slowly she saw an expression in his face which had never been there before.

'Come back,' he repeated; and then, as she came stumbling forward, 'Sit down.'

She sat down, very suddenly, and immediately hung out her little white signal of distress. But Denzil was not to be mollified; she deserved a lesson, and this time she should have it.

'I don't think you quite understand the position of affairs,' he said; and in a few incisive words proceeded to lay it before her. She was weeping when he had finished, but he made no attempt to soften the severity of his reprimand.

'Since I am so—so ignorant, and so—so worthless,' she sobbed, finding voice at length, 'I wonder you engaged me as your secretary.'

'I wonder why I did,' said he; and all at once his face relaxed. 'What do you think?' he went on, in a tone now no longer stern, but friendly and colloquial; 'what can have induced me to do it, do you suppose? Self-interest, perhaps? I may have thought it possible to turn your inexperience to my own profit?'

She was looking at him very hard, the great tears hanging on her eyelashes.

'No, I don't think that,' she said, after a long pause. 'I think—I think you did it out of kindness.'

'Do you, indeed?' said he; and then he smiled, and Lucy gave a little gasp, and wiped her eyes.

'As a matter of fact,' he went on, 'I do feel kindly towards you, and I honestly wish for your good; I am glad that you realise it. Now, this being the case, don't you think you might try a little harder to please me? When your father was alive I daresay you often tried to please him. Well, I am old enough to be your father——'

'You don't look it,' she interpolated, with a watery smile.

Her intention was evidently to convey a graceful tribute, and possibly to heap coals of fire upon his head. Graham bowed gravely, though he with difficulty restrained the exclamation which rose to his lips: 'Oh, you impossible little being!'

He was, however, genuinely touched when, a moment or two later, she declared, looking earnestly in his face:

'I will really try to please you—I should like to please you.'

His satisfaction at this promising attitude was, however, somewhat checked when, on the following day, Lucy arrived with a severe cold, and, on being questioned as to its cause, owned that it was probably due to the fact of her having sat up till one o'clock on the previous night 'studying.'

'What, the spelling-book?' inquired Denzil.

'Yes,' returned she in husky but triumphant tones; 'I worked seven hours yesterday.'

'And you were so much absorbed, I suppose,' suggested he, 'that you allowed the fire to go out?'

'Oh, I don't have any fire,' explained Lucy, still triumphantly. 'I have to be very economical, you see——'

'But surely,' said Denzil, 'you could afford yourself a fire. I intended your salary——'

'Oh, but I am saving up for a rainy day,' she returned, with a bright little nod. She was evidently much pleased that he should realise her foresight and common sense. Graham, with a kind of painstaking exasperation, endeavoured to make clear to her, first, that such economies were mistaken, her health being of paramount importance; secondly, that her zeal in the matter of the spelling-book was a little intemperate, and would probably lead to results less satisfactory than she anticipated.

Lucy, though evidently unconvinced, was submissive. She agreed to confine her orthographical labours to two hours daily, and capitulated as regarded the fire to a certain extent.

'While my cold lasts,' she conceded; and with that Denzil was forced to be content.

She did honestly try very hard during the succeeding weeks;

she was so extremely attentive to the smallest syllable that fell from his lips that her intent gaze made Denzil quite nervous whenever he paused for a word ; she learned a variety of orthographical rules by heart, and if the wrong one was occasionally brought into play, Graham was not cruel enough to lay stress upon it.

Nevertheless, he noticed with concern that she was growing thin and pale ; and, one morning, observing the particularly pinched appearance of her little face, he startled her by inquiring abruptly :

‘ What did you have for breakfast, Miss Spencer ? ’

‘ Two biscuits and a banana,’ responded Miss Spencer promptly.

‘ Was that—excuse my seeming curiosity, it is not meant impertinently—was that from economy or choice ? ’

‘ Well, of course I like to be thrifty,’ returned Lucy, summoning up her most sensible air ; ‘ but, as a matter of fact, I haven’t much appetite lately, and I thought I could eat that better than tea and bread-and-butter.’

‘ Have you left off having fires ? ’ he inquired, after a pause.

‘ Oh, yes ; I don’t want a fire now. I am quite well. A fire wouldn’t give me an appetite,’ she added, with a sage look.

Denzil groaned inwardly. What was to be done with this child ? She was no more fit to look after herself than a two-year-old baby. She would be ill upon his hands next. He had a momentary inclination to raise her salary, but refrained ; on some points she was extremely sensitive, and would have at once guessed that the unmerited increase of pay was, in other words, an act of charity.

In spite of her most valiant efforts it became more and more evident that the secretaryship was a farce ; and Denzil tried his best to find more suitable employment for her, but with signal ill-success. It might have been that, in spite of his assurances of Miss Spencer’s unblemished respectability, people were rather afraid of engaging a *protégée* of his, or it might have been owing to the fact that there was really so little to go upon. She was a nice girl, young and bright, and that was about all. No experience, no references, extremely few accomplishments, and those far from perfect of their kind. It was scarcely any wonder that his friends shrugged their shoulders and advised him to send her back to Cornwall. He had begun to think that he would be obliged to make an effort in this direction (shrinking though he did from inflicting such a blow on the little creature, who had, in spite of a hundred weaknesses—or perhaps on account of them—managed to endear herself to him

after a fashion) when an incident occurred which threw an unexpected light on Miss Spencer's circumstances.

One morning she approached him with an air of subdued excitement and mystery, and asked if he could possibly dispense with her services on the following day.

'It's something rather particular,' she added. 'Somebody's coming by train. I am to meet him at eleven. He's my cousin—I mean,' correcting herself with an evident twinge of conscience—'a sort of cousin—a—a connection.'

'One, I daresay, who aspires to be rather a near connection,' suggested Denzil, with a smile. 'In other words, you are engaged to him, Miss Spencer?'

Lucy flushed very prettily, and smiled and dimpled, and said: 'Yes; she and Robert had been engaged for a very long time—nearly thirteen months.'

'I am delighted to hear it!' exclaimed Denzil heartily. 'But why—don't be angry with me for asking—why don't you marry Mr. Robert?'

'Mr. Burton,' corrected Lucy. 'Well, you see, though he has a very good appointment, he thinks it would not be quite prudent to marry yet. He is getting seventy pounds a year, but he says we ought to wait till he is earning a good deal more than that. But lots of people do marry who haven't much more,' she added, rather wistfully.

'I suppose they do,' agreed Denzil.

He was pondering deeply, but felt at the same time an immense sense of relief.

'What is Mr. Burton's profession?' he asked.

'He's assistant master in a boys' school. He's very clever—*dreadfully* clever; he got two scholarships, and he was at Oxford.'

'Come,' cried Denzil delightedly, 'this sounds very promising. I should like to see Mr. Burton. Let me see—at three o'clock to-morrow, after you and he have had time to say a good deal to each other, and after he has lunched and rested, and all that kind of thing, he might call upon me. Will you ask him to do this—will you tell him I shall expect him at three o'clock?'

Lucy, full of delight and importance, readily agreed, accepting Mr. Denzil's intimation as one more proof of the interest he took in her. Her attention wandered several times during the course of the morning, but Denzil felt no irritation: his spirits had gone up with a bound.

At the appointed hour on the following day Mr. Burton made

his appearance ; a tall young man, somewhat solemn as to manner, somewhat shabby as to dress, a little uncertain with regard to the disposal of his arms and legs, but with a good, clever, honest face.

Denzil surveyed him with satisfaction, but did not at once speak.

'I understood you wished to see me,' remarked the visitor presently.

'Yes, I want to see you very particularly ; I have something to say to you.'

Denzil paused, and then went on, leaning forward with a smile : 'I think you would suit me very well as secretary. Will you undertake the post ?'

Robert Burton stared at him.

'I have never thought of undertaking any such position,' he faltered. 'Besides, I understood that my cousin——'

'Your cousin doesn't quite suit me,' said Denzil. He stopped abruptly, finding it a little difficult to explain to the lover the various reasons why Miss Spencer was not quite satisfactory.

Burton's face fell. 'She told me she was getting on so well,' he murmured.

'The fact is, I would rather have to do with a man,' resumed Denzil. 'The work on which I am chiefly engaged is not such as a young girl should be associated with.'

Robert said he realised that ; but that, nevertheless, even if Miss Spencer was dispensed with, he himself did not feel inclined to fill her vacant place. He had, in fact, already chosen his career, and intended to adhere to it. Promotion was slow, yet he could not but feel he was more likely to be successful in a walk of life for which he had been trained than if he were to relinquish it for duties to which he was unaccustomed.

'The salary would be a hundred and fifty pounds a year,' said Graham persuasively. 'I would guarantee a hundred and fifty pounds a year ; I would undertake to retain you in my employment until you found another engagement equally remunerative and perhaps more congenial to yourself.'

Robert stared more than ever, asking himself if his interlocutor had taken leave of his senses.

'I have a special reason for this proposal,' went on Denzil. 'I want—well, to be quite plain—I want you to marry your cousin at once.'

Robert rose to his feet, flushing hotly.

'That is a matter,' he said stammeringly, 'a—a very private

matter—I don't think I could submit to any interference on such a point.'

Denzil rose, too, and clapped him on the shoulders.

'Now, look here, my good chap,' he said; 'you had better listen to me. I haven't the least wish to be meddlesome, but I think you would make a very good secretary, and I'm quite certain that you ought to marry Miss Spencer without loss of time. Are you aware, my dear fellow,' he went on, 'that that child is living in an attic, chiefly on—on bananas? That she doesn't have a fire, because she wants to be economical; that she nearly dies of fright before she crosses a street? I watched her from my window, and observed that she generally stopped short almost under the horses' feet; that she—well, think of what she is, and ask yourself if she is fit to be alone in London?'

Robert turned pale, and looked extremely serious. Denzil respected the struggle which was evidently going on in his mind.

'I can only see this way out of the difficulty,' he went on. 'I have tried to find employment for her. I even thought that her engagement here, temporary though it is, might be a useful training for her, but—'

'I'm sorry you have found her so unsatisfactory,' said the young man in a wounded tone.

Denzil took a turn about the room, paused, laughed, and finally said, with a humorous look: 'Well, you know—as a matter of fact, she can't spell!'

'I know she can't,' said the lover; and he, too, laughed somewhat ruefully, but with so kindly and tender a look in his eyes that Denzil's heart went out to him.

'You may trust me, Mr. Burton,' he said earnestly. 'I am not at all a Quixotic person, but I take a very great interest in Miss Spencer; and, honestly, I don't know what else is to be done. Now, I rather fancy that, were it not for certain honourable scruples, you would have no objection to marrying her out of hand?'

'No objection at all,' said Robert, with a smile quite as tender as the former one, and not in the least rueful. 'Quite the contrary. I—it seems like a dream.'

Denzil looked at him half sadly.

Yes, no wonder the good fellow found it hard to realise that the beloved little bride, whom he hoped to make his own only after years of labour, was actually thrust into his arms. Graham extended his hand frankly:

'Come,' he said, 'you may trust me. Don't be afraid that the

obligation will be too great. You have plenty of ability, and I shall make you very useful to me. In fact,' he went on, 'you will confer as great a benefit as you receive.'

'I cannot admit that,' said Robert; but he put his hand fearlessly into the philanthropist's. 'I—I don't know how to thank you!'

Denzil shook his hand warmly, and looked at him with genuine approval. Not one man in a thousand, he said to himself, could reconcile gratitude with self-respect. This man had sufficient greatness of soul not only to accept a benefit but not to be ashamed of accepting it.

A few minutes later Robert went his way, walking upon air, in a state of rapture only equalled by his bewilderment; and Graham Denzil was left alone to congratulate himself on the success of his enterprise.

All his life long he had been considered an eminently wise and judicious person, one whose dealings with his fellow creatures, humane and generous though they might be, were nevertheless dictated by sound practical common sense. Yet to-day he had done what the world would call an extremely foolish thing: he had set his customary rules of conduct at defiance, and become, for the nonce, undeniably Quixotic. He had taken a perfectly unknown young man out of the sphere in which he was contented and useful, and had thrown upon him responsibilities for which he might or might not be adapted; he had brought about what could not but be termed an improvident marriage, and had pledged himself to act thenceforth the part of Providence to these two young creatures. And yet, as he meditated on these enormities, he chuckled. He was untroubled by any qualms of conscience; entirely unabashed. Not all the wise and important undertakings in which he had hitherto been engaged gave him so much satisfaction as the mental contemplation of the bliss of these two unimportant units.

Nevertheless, when his eyes fell upon the writing-table at which Lucy generally sat, the chair with the hassock in front of it, because those ridiculous little feet of hers were such a long way from the ground; the blotting-paper, ornamented with various scrawls by means of which his late secretary had made trial trips, as it were, when any particularly difficult word was in question; the pen-handle nibbled at the end—he heaved a little sigh.

'After all,' he said, 'I believe I shall miss her!'

M. E. FRANCIS.

Flowers of the Field.

IT is difficult to define a weed. A large number of plants so designated in popular language are of distinct beauty and interest. There are flowers of the field, as well as of the woods and moorlands and of the seashore. Some rare and delicate species are to be found among what Shakespeare calls 'the idle weeds that grow among our sustaining corn,' and few will venture to deny that a large wheatfield overrun with scarlet poppies is a splendid sight, or a wide stretch of yellow charlock a veritable 'field of the cloth of gold.' The truth is that the term 'weed' has reference rather to the locality in which the plant is found than to any peculiarity in the species itself. It is a plant growing where it is not wanted. It is not any particular plant, or species of plants: it is any plant, no matter how beautiful or how botanically interesting, which has trespassed on cultivated ground and is injurious to the growing crop. It is a troublesome intruder: it is an agricultural nuisance.

In ancient times, among our old writers, all cornfield plants seem to have been classed together under the general names of 'cockle' or 'darnel.' The words stood for all hurtful weeds that 'choke the herbs for want of husbandry.' 'Under the name of *Cockle* and *Darnel*,' says old Newton in his *Herbal*, published in 1587, 'is comprehended all vicious, noisom and unprofitable graine, encombring and hindring good corne.' And in that sense 'cockle' had been already used by Chaucer. It is further of interest to notice that in the Anglo-Saxon version of the Parable of the Tares recorded in the thirteenth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel the strange Greek word *ζιζάνια*, not found in classical literature, and simply Latinised in the Vulgate *zizania*, is translated *coccel*, and this rendering is followed by Wycliff, and in other early versions of the New Testament. The following is from the Rheims translation, published in 1582, and so strange does the rendering sound to ears accustomed to the Authorised Version that it is worth quoting in full. The parable is headed 'The sower of the cockle,'

and runs thus: 'The kingdom of heaven is likened to a man that sowed good seed in his field. But while men were asleep his enemy came and oversowed cockle among the wheat, and went his way. And when the blade was sprung up and brought forth fruit then appeared also the cockle. Then the servants of the master of the house came and said to him: Master, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it cockle? And he saith to them: An enemy hath done this. And the servants said to him: Wilt thou then that we go and gather it up? And he said: No; lest while ye gather up the cockle, you root up the wheat also together with it. Let both grow until the harvest: and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers: Gather up first the cockle, and bind it into bundles to burn; but gather the wheat into my barn.' We get another illustration of the same use in the quaint and vigorous sermons of good old Bishop Latimer, who exclaims: 'Oh, that our prelates would bee as diligent to sowe the corne of goode doctrine, as Sathan is to sow Cockel and Darnel.' And so with Gower, and Spenser, and Shakespeare. But if the poets and preachers speak in general terms, the old herbalists were beginning to discriminate between cockle and darnel and other weeds. Cockle was becoming restricted to the purple corn-cockle, *Agrostemma Githago*, L., and darnel to the wheat-like grass, *Lolium temulentum*, L. Dr. William Turner, sometime Dean of Wells, who has been well called 'The Father of English botanists,' notices in his *Names of Herbes*, published in 1548, this confusion of terms. 'Some,' he says, 'take cockel for lolio, but thei are far decyved as I shal declare at large if God wil, in my Latin herbal.' A few years later the identification of darnel with *Lolium* is clear; and in his famous *Herbal*, under a fairly good representation of the plant, old Gerarde says, 'Among the hurtfull weeds Darnell is the first,' and he goes on to describe accurately the species, which he identifies, and doubtless rightly, with the *zizania* of Gospel history.

The plant is an annual cornfield weed, fortunately not generally distributed (at any rate in these days), the seeds of which bear a striking resemblance to grains of wheat. The injurious properties of the plant were well known to the ancients, for Virgil speaks of it as *infelix lolium*. The stem and foliage are innocuous, and in some countries, as at Malta, where the species is abundant, the plant is used as fodder: it is the seed only that is poisonous, and many instances are on record of its baneful effects, which are said to resemble intoxication. This was noticed by old Gerarde, who says that 'the new bread wherein Darnell is, eaten hot, causeth drunken-

nesse ; in like manner doth beere or ale wherein the seed is fallen, or put into the malt.' Indeed, in the Middle Ages it seems to have been a not uncommon custom purposely to intermix the seeds of darnel with the grain from which the malt was made, in order to enhance the intoxicating power of the beer. In some parts of the country, as in Dorsetshire and in the Isle of Wight, this plant is known as 'cheat,' from its resemblance to the wheat among which it grows. The seeds of the corn-cockle were also supposed in former days to possess qualities highly injurious to man. This handsome plant, with its upright downy stem and fine purple flowers, is often abundant in cornfields, and it is difficult to prevent its large seeds from becoming mixed with the wheat at threshing-time. Old Gerarde, who rightly identifies corn-cockle with *Githago segetum*, Desf., quaintly says : 'What hurt it doth among corne, the spoile of bread, as well in colour, taste, and unwholesomnesse, is better knowe than desired.' It seems doubtful, however, if this fine plant deserves so sweeping a condemnation.

There is yet another plant which bears a bad reputation from the same cause. This is the purple cow-wheat, *Melampyrum arvense*, L., 'a gaudy but most pernicious weed,' with oblong seeds like black wheat-grains, which, becoming mixed with the corn, is said to render the flour dark and unwholesome. This plant is very local, but usually abundant where it occurs, as in some parts of East Anglia, especially of Norfolk, and in the Isle of Wight. In the latter station, from Ventnor to St. Lawrence, in the cornfields above the Undercliff, and inland as far as Whitwell, this truly splendid 'weed' flourishes in extraordinary abundance. It is the characteristic plant of the locality. Seen for the first time, one is amazed at the sight of this strange and showy species growing in such remarkable profusion. It flourishes not only among the wheat and barley, but also on the dry banks and grassy borders of the fields ; it has invaded the bushy slopes above Pelham Woods, and may be seen all along the upper edge of the cliff. How the plant came to find a home in the island it is now impossible to discover. It is not mentioned as growing there by the early botanists, and its presence could not possibly have been overlooked. Its long leafy spikes of purple and yellow flowers, with beautifully variegated tracts of a bright rose colour, render it one of the most conspicuous plants in the British Flora. Gerarde, who gives an illustration of it in his *Herbal*, speaks of the species as a 'stranger in England.' John Ray, on the authority of one Mr. F. Sherard, gives as its only locality, 'In the corn on the right hand just before

you come to Lycham, in Norfolk.' The *Flora Anglica*, published in 1798, quotes Ray's statement, and adds a few additional localities. But the earliest record of it as growing in the Isle of Wight occurs in a list of island plants published in 1823. A few years later Dr. Bromfield, who found it in vast abundance in its present locality, carefully investigated its history. Local tradition asserted that the plant was imported with wheat-seed from 'foreign parts'—some said Spain, some Jersey, others, with more probability, Norfolk. He learnt that it was the custom at harvest-time to pull up the weed with the greatest care, and carry it off the fields in bags, and to burn it, picking up the very seeds from the ground wherever they could be perceived lying. He was told that the bread made from the wheat on the farms above the Undercliff was not so dark coloured and 'hot' as it used to be, and that the 'droll' plant was less plentiful than formerly. Its local name was 'poverty weed,' with reference, no doubt, not only to the way in which it impoverished the soil, but also to the fact that the seeds, becoming mixed with the corn, rendered the latter of small value in the market. It is a curious fact that, abundant as the weed is on the farms it has invaded, it does not appear to have made fresh conquests of late years. Indeed, its area is almost exactly the same to-day as it was in 1838, when Dr. Bromfield visited the locality.

In the British Flora there are some twenty to thirty plants which bear the specific name of *arvensis*, a word derived from the Latin *arvum*, which denotes a ploughed field. Of these weeds so specially associated with agriculture the greatest pests are the thistle and the charlock. Hooker speaks of the former as 'the commonest pest of agriculture,' and in some districts it is extraordinarily abundant. But it is not perhaps so generally troublesome as the charlock. This yellow-flowered, cruciferous plant, sometimes and rightly called 'wild mustard,' and known in Scotland as 'skellocks,' is truly 'an odious weed in tillage land.' The direct mischief caused by it is not only that it overshadows the young growing corn, but, in a dry season especially, it sucks up the moisture and goodness of the soil which should have gone to nourish the wheat crop. Indirectly, too, it does harm by encouraging the turnip 'fly' or flea-beetle, and by harbouring the slime fungus which specially attacks cruciferous crops. Of late years an attempt has been made by spraying the young plants with a solution of sulphate of copper to destroy this pest in its early state, and the experiment is regarded by many scientific agriculturists with favour. Among other cornfield weeds to which the term *arvensis*

has been assigned, from the frequency of their occurrence in arable land, may be mentioned the corn-spurry, the field-parsley, the common pimpernel or poor-man's weather glass, the field forget-me-not, the field stachys, the corn-mint, fumitory, shepherd's purse, and bindweed. These plants, however, with the exception of the last, which in some places is a most troublesome weed, are comparatively harmless to the farmer. There is a passage in Crabbe's *Village* in which the poet, who found his main delight in botany, gathers together several of these cornfield intruders. He is doubtless thinking of the bleak, wind-swept land above the cliffs at Aldeburgh, where—

'Rank weeds, that every art and care defy,
Reign o'er the land and rob the blighted rye;
There thistles stretch their prickly arms afar,
And to the ragged infant threaten war;
There poppies nodding, mock the hope of toil;
There the blue bugloss paints the sterile soil;
Hardy and high, above the slender sheaf,
The slimy mallow waves her silky leaf;
O'er the young shoot the charlock throws a shade,
And clasping tares cling round the sickly blade;
With mingled tints the rocky coasts abound,
And a sad splendour vainly shines around.'

It is marvellous how rapidly some plants will spread themselves over wide stretches of land. The writer was struck with the way in which the yellow charlock took possession of the line when the Meon Valley Railway was being made a few years ago. The very next spring after the embankments were thrown up their sides were clothed with this rampant and conspicuous crucifer. A line of yellow across the country marked in many places the course of the railway. Poppies, too, for some unknown reason, will occasionally appear in strange and wonderful profusion. The striking instance related by Lord Macaulay may be quoted by way of illustration. After the battle of Landen the ground, he tells us, 'during many months was strewn with skulls and bones of men and horses, and with fragments of hats and shoes, saddles and holsters. The next summer, the soil, fertilised by twenty thousand corpses, broke forth into millions of poppies. The traveller, who, on the road from Saint-Tron to Tirlemont, saw that vast sheet of rich scarlet spreading from Landen to Neerwinden, could hardly help fancying that the figurative prediction of the Hebrew prophet was literally accomplished, that the earth was

disclosing her blood, and refusing to cover the slain.' In districts where the land is poor and badly cultivated one not infrequently comes across fields almost wholly occupied with weeds of cultivation, such as the corn marigold, the purple corn-cockle, or the stinking Mayweed. Sometimes a more uncommon species has taken possession of the soil. In a chalky upland field in the neighbourhood of Winchester the writer once met with the field chickweed, *Cerastium arvense*, L., in extraordinary profusion, and it made a striking appearance with its large white flowers. In the same neighbourhood a grass-sown field that bordered the high road near Bishop's Waltham was literally purple last May, to the extent of several acres, with the flowers of the early meadow orchis, Old Gerarde, the herbalist, who made many botanical excursions about England in the latter part of the sixteenth century, speaks of the abundance of the yellow melilot in parts of Essex. About Clare and Heningham (Castle Hedingham) he saw 'very many acres overgrowne with it, insomuch that it doth not onely spoyle the land, but the corne also, as cockle or darnel, and is a weed that generally spreadeth over that corner of the shire.'

Sometimes most interesting and delicate plants are found among the corn. The beautiful *Adonis* or pheasant's eye will never be forgotten if once seen. This striking little annual, with its finely cut leaves and bright scarlet flowers, belongs to the buttercup tribe, and is only occasionally met with. Still, in places it has firmly established itself, and year after year may be found on the same farms. In the chalky cornfields above the Undercliff in the Isle of Wight it has been known for many years, and may be seen every summer in company with lamb's lettuce, the dainty field madder, and the gaudy cow-wheat. But in one district in Hampshire it may be regarded, at least in some seasons, as plentiful. More than a century ago it was found on a farm between Alresford and Winchester, and there it has remained ever since. Year after year it comes up in the wheat and barleyfields, some summers in considerable profusion. Last year the writer noticed a large bunch of it in a poor woman's hand who sat opposite to him in a railway carriage. He ventured to ask her where she had obtained it; sure enough, it came from the farm above alluded to. 'There was a wonderful sight of it,' the good woman said. The modest little mouse-tail is a near relative of the pheasant's eye, and, like it, is but rarely seen. It is so called from the arrangement of the carpels or seed-vessels, which form a close slender spike, sometimes two inches in length, and resembling, says an

old botanist, 'very notably the taile of a mouse.' It is most erratic in its habits, suddenly appearing in spots where it had been unknown before. Kingsley tells us in his *Prose Idylls* that for fourteen years he had hunted for it in vain at Eversley, while in the fifteenth it appeared by dozens upon a new-made bank, which had been for at least two hundred years a farmyard gateway. Yet another plant of the same genus which is occasionally met with among the corn is the beautiful field larkspur. Ray mentions it as having been 'found in great plenty by Mr. F. Sherard amongst the corn in Swaffham Field in Cambridgeshire'; and in the same district it is still in some seasons not uncommon. It is an exceedingly pretty plant, with its terminal racemes of blue, pink, or white flowers. Ray has also chronicled several uncommon plants as growing in the cornfields near his home at Black Notley in Essex. Among these may be specially mentioned the common thorow-wax, or 'thorow-leafe,' a name given to the plant now known as *Bupleurum rotundifolium*, L., by Dr. Wm. Turner in the sixteenth century, because, as he says, 'the stalke waxeth throw the leaves'; and the 'small narrow-leaved cudweed, very much branched, and full of seed' (*Filago gallica*, L.), one of the rarest of British plants, which, it is satisfactory to notice, still finds a home in the Essex cornfields. One more plant which frequents similar situations calls for notice. This is the corn bellflower (*Specularia hybrida*, DC.), known among the older botanists as Venus' looking-glasse or coddled corn-violet. It is a distinguished-looking little annual, some eight or ten inches in height, with dark blue flowers. The writer has seen it in the sandy fields between Sandown and Shanklin in the Isle of Wight, but it is more frequently met with in the Eastern Counties. It is not uncommon in parts of Essex, and a few years ago it could always be found at the right season on a farm near the picturesque village of Finchingfield.

But if weeds be a perennial nuisance to the farmer, they are no less a source of constant annoyance to the gardener. Gilbert White used to employ a 'weeding-woman' at Selborne, in order, as he tells us, that his garden might be neat and tidy against the arrival of visitors; and, indeed, in some years daily attention is imperative if the rampant intruders are to be held in check. After rain the borders quickly become smothered with groundsel and veronica, and in some districts with the annual mercury. But more troublesome still, because of the difficulty of eradicating them, are the lesser convolvulus and the gout-weed, whose long, white, creeping roots will continue to grow if the smallest particle

be left in the soil. The former of these truly pestiferous weeds is strangely known among the market gardeners near Portsmouth as 'lilies'; while the latter, as its name implies, was formerly a famous remedy for the gout, and was therefore doubtless cultivated in many gardens as a medicinal herb.

Still now and again some interesting plants appear as 'weeds' in gardens. Canary-grass, buckwheat, and the caper-spurge are not uncommon visitors. A few specimens of the very rare finger-glass (*Digitaria humifusa*, Pers.) appeared one year in the writer's herbaceous border at Portchester, and for several years in succession the almost equally rare bristle-grass (*Setaria viridis*, Beauv.). In another garden in the same parish the white goose-foot (*Chenopodium ficifolium*, Sm.) made its appearance in 1893: this species had never been noticed in Hampshire before; but in the following season it was repeatedly searched for in vain. Another rare Hampshire plant is the treacle-mustard, sometimes from its general habit of growth called wallflower-mustard. It is not infrequently met with as a cornfield weed in parts of East Anglia, but in Hants it has merely been noticed in one or two localities, and then only single specimens were found. Strange to say, it appeared last season in abundance in an old garden associated with memories of Izaak Walton in the Meon Valley. In some gardens in the South of England, especially in the Isle of Wight, the sweet-scented coltsfoot, or, as it is sometimes called from its time of flowering, the winter heliotrope, has firmly established itself. It is often in blossom as early as January, and with its fragrant flowers is not an unwelcomed intruder, except when it strays beyond the limits of the shrubbery. 'In the garden at Swainston,' consecrated by Tennyson's lines,

'Nightingales warbled without,
Within was weeping for thee,'

the plant is remarkably abundant.

The illustrious John Ray noted the broad-leaved spurge as 'coming up spontaneously here in my own orchard at Black Notley,' and a specimen of this uncommon plant, gathered by his friend Dr. Dale in 'Ray's orchard,' is preserved in Buddle's Herbarium at the South Kensington Museum. A few years ago the writer visited Ray's house 'on Dewlands,' now, alas! burnt to the ground, and searched in vain for the broad-leaved spurge. The place has been much altered since the great naturalist died there in 1705, and the orchard has been mostly stubbed up. An ancient pear-

tree, however, was standing, which tradition alleged to have been planted by the botanist himself. And beneath its lichen-covered branches there was growing among the potatoes a most rare and interesting 'weed.' It was the lovely blue pimpernel (*Anagallis cærulea*, Sch.). Seldom, indeed, is this dainty little annual met with, but once seen its beauty will never be forgotten. Old Gerarde and the early botanists regarded it as a distinct species, and called it 'the blew-flowred or female pimpernell,' in distinction to 'the male or scarlet pimpernell,' or poor man's weather-glass. Once or twice only had the writer seen this delicate and lovely variety of the scarlet *Anagallis*; and there, in one of the most interesting of British localities, in the garden of the 'house on Dewlands'—the home of the celebrated John Ray, where he wrote his *Synopsis of British Plants*, the first true English Flora—beneath the venerable pear-tree which his own hands had planted, there opened to the sunlight the exquisite blue petals of *Anagallis cærulea*. The writer was overjoyed at the discovery; the fragile little plant was tenderly secured, and afterwards no less tenderly preserved, and is now the most honoured specimen in the dark oaken cabinet which holds his not inconsiderable collection of flowers of the field.

JOHN VAUGHAN.

The Troll's Path.

THE Troll's Path! What a fine old Scandinavian romance such a name might conjure up! Yet the errand that took me to the place was almost wholly unromantic, being nothing more or less than the search for a reindeer buck carrying an exceptionally fine pair of horns.

It was in August 1898 that I first found my way to that part of Norway, building great hopes on the somewhat flimsy foundation of some chance words let fall by a wandering Lapp whom I met during the previous autumn. Now, a Lapp cannot speak the truth if he tries, but this one was not trying, being apparently rather mad and certainly exceedingly drunk. Consequently, I had put faith in his story, and as a result had discovered a mountain range which seemed to correspond with it; and I fondly hoped that the splendid white stag of which he had spoken might be equally real.

Hunting in new ground necessitates a good deal of preliminary trouble, but I had been lucky in this respect, and, through the good offices of the parson, had enlisted a couple of sturdy Norsemen at the nearest village, forty miles away. Pfarherr Olsen was a delightful white-haired old gentleman, who spoke English perfectly, and insisted on my staying with him as long as my preparations were in the making. He was an enthusiastic antiquary and student of folklore, full of the archæology and quaint legends of the country from pre-Christian times onwards, and, delighted to find an interested listener, he would sit by the great corner hearth of birch logs at night and reel off story after story of kings and dragons and witches, from a seemingly inexhaustible store. His own church, a queer little semi-Byzantine structure of blackened wood, was a favourite subject. Some part of it was undoubtedly very old, dating, he thought, from Pagan times, and the building of even the newer part was ascribed by tradition to a Troll named—it is well to be precise in these matters—Tök. This triumphant

misdirection of evil forces had, of course, been achieved by the device so popular among our pious forefathers of persuading the devil to work by the promise of a pair of eyes or a soul, or somebody else's baby, and then shamelessly cheating him out of his wages by an ingenious piece of sophistry or a quite undeservedly lucky bit of eavesdropping.

Evidence of infernal workmanship was clearly to be seen in a tall pillar covered with quaint Runic sculpture on the north side of the chancel, while in the corresponding place on the other side was only the half of a column, the legend asserting that the deluded Tök, being hailed by his unguessable name as he was shouldering home the finishing piece of the pillar, threw it (in a somewhat excusable fit of petulance) into the lake.

But the great glory of the place was the famous stone Cup of Skalsbjem, which in former times, on every St. John's Eve, distilled a healing liquid so potent that one drop would cure any human ailment. The church walls even now hold innumerable offerings of the cripples, blind, and other sufferers who had been restored to health; but, alas! the virtue had departed ever since—a full century ago—an irreverent robber had broken open the saint's offertory-box, and decamped with the money.

These and many other stories of real and mythical events I got from the old parson, together with much information as to the fishing and shooting of the district.

When I told him of my crazy Lapp, and the isolated group of snow-capped mountains to which I was trusting for an ideal hunting ground, he laughed and said: 'Well, the mountains are certainly a fact, and in all probability the best deer in the country are to be found there; but I very much doubt if you will persuade Nils and Erik to go there after them.'

'Why?' I asked.

'Just the most usual reasons,' he said. 'The place has always been credited with being a favourite haunt of the Bjerg-folk; in fact, the group is known as the Troldpiggene. Not many Norse peasants would be brave enough to visit them even by daylight. By the way, they are connected with our famous Stone Cup. I think I told you how it came here? No? Well, it was brought, they say, one St. John's Eve by a wild-looking outlander, clothed in a single garment of shaggy hair. General consent at first set him down as the Wandering Jew, who, you are aware, has on many occasions been reported as visiting different parts of this country. Afterwards, when the miraculous properties of the Cup became

manifest, it was agreed that the stranger must have been St. John the Baptist himself. The day after his arrival and mysterious departure, there came to Skalshjem a terrified fisherman, who had been setting his nets in the lake which lies at the foot of the Troid-piggene. He professed to have witnessed an encounter between the shaggy Cupbearer and a monstrous Troll who barred his passage. Twice the holy man turned and took a different path, and each time the Troll confronted him again with blasphemous threats. The third time he faced the brink of a huge precipice called the Eggen, which falls a sheer thousand feet to the lake; and lo! a pathway opened itself at his feet, and the fisherman saw the miracle of a man crossing the face of that smooth vertical wall as easily as a fly might walk down it. But half-way across, the straight rock wall was cleft by a shelving gully running down from the highest point of the mountain, through which a little stream rushed on its way to the lake, leaping into the air five hundred feet above its surface, and falling like a white ribbon to be lost in misty spray long before it could reach the dark water below. And as the Cupbearer reached the edge of this ravine, there above him stood the evil monster, with a huge rock torn from the hilltop poised in readiness to hurl him to destruction. But the Saint held high the Cup, and, in a voice like a trumpet, cried: "Twice have I tried to save thee, Norre, but now stand thou there to all eternity." Instantly came a tremendous clap of thunder, the sky was darkened, and it seemed as if the cliff itself were falling, for the lake was lashed into storm by an avalanche of great stones, one of which smashed the boat into matchwood, and the next thing that the fisherman remembered was crawling out of the water half-drowned, and coming back to Skalshjem as fast as he could run.'

He added with a smile: 'The fish are probably a good size now, for that was about nine hundred years ago, and you need not be afraid that anyone has gone netting there since.'

'The interesting thing about this legend,' he continued, 'is the fidelity with which the natural features have been preserved, for I do not believe that any living Norwegian except myself has been there. But about forty years ago, in my hunting days, I followed the biggest buck I had ever seen to the edge of Norre Vand, and saw the Eggen, and the path traversing it, the little waterfall, and old Norre himself, a lump of black rock, squatted at the head of the ravine, just as you have heard in the story. The path seemed to lead down into a circular valley, evidently an ancient crater, with steep, ice-covered sides and unusually green vegetation on its floor

which I christened the Troll's Cauldron. Unluckily, I never had time to go there again, for the whole place was curious and worth exploration. I could see, at any rate, that the fisherman's shower of stones would be almost an annual occurrence, for the stratification was nearly vertical, and the winter's frosts would be perpetually splitting fragments off the highest crags. These, when the snow melted in the spring, would come plunging down the ravine into the lake, and the shallow ridge made by their piled-up *débris* showed clearly through the water below the cliff. And as to the fact that no one fishes there now, well, you know, the lake is far away, and lies very high, and is very full of snow-water and lumps of ice; and I think just possibly there may be no fish in it.'

And so, with a twinkle in his eye, he bade me good-night; and early next morning I started, with a mixed crew of boys and dogs and ponies, and, of course, my two trusty henchmen, on the forty-mile tramp to the high fjeld.

There is no need to say much of that journey; it was full of the usual beauties of scene, and the usual incidents, amusing and annoying, peculiar to pack-trains, and rather more than usually full of little mishaps from defective gear and self-sufficient ponies.

Somehow the retainers seemed by no means so much disturbed by the delays as I was, but accepted them with quite a superfluity of the usual Norse *sangfroid* and resignation. I speedily divined the reason for this cheerful submission to our woes when we found ourselves just at the end of daylight at a neat-looking sceter, nine miles short of our destination, and saw a remarkably pretty girl giving us a smiling welcome at the door.

When Erik and Nils did agree, their unanimity was wonderful. They joined in protesting that the ponies were worn out, the packing wanted a thorough overhaul, the sceter was the last possible halting-place, the remaining nine miles were a shockingly *dole vei*, compared with which the numerous iniquities of the path already traversed were as naught, and to attempt the passage in the dark was merely to court disaster. The end of it was that the whole army was housed in one or other of the various little wooden shanties grouped round the main building; and after pretty Karen and her sister had given me a most sumptuous repast of crisp new flad-brod, such coffee as no London club can provide, a huge dish of pancakes, and another of molte-berries flanked by a half-gallon bowl of the richest cream, I really felt quite thankful for the little difficulties which had prevented us from getting any further on our way.

The same little difficulties, however, seemed to begin again next morning, for somehow either Nils or Erik was almost always out of the way just when everything else seemed ready for a start, and the moment either of them was missed the other was sure to disappear in search of him. But at last we really did get away, and at a turn of the track the scoter was lost to view, with Karen and Lotta still wafting impartial kisses towards the whole cavalcade; though from the aggressively cheerful demeanour of Erik and the sulky looks of Nils, I strongly suspected that all of Karen's were meant for the former.

That evening we were comfortably settled, with our modest belongings all in proper order, in the tiny shooting-hut perched up among the rocks and snow; and while to the eastward the distant ridges of the Troldpiggene glowed with a softened splendour of rosy light reflected from the setting sun, the last of our transport department were just visible as mere dots far down the valley on their homeward way, and we three were left to the business of reindeer stalking on the Næsdals Fjeld.

Erik was a splendid specimen of a good-looking, light-haired, blue-eyed Norseman; very bright and willing, and wonderfully quick at seeing deer without using a glass. He was by far the pleasanter companion of the two, for Nils was as dissimilar as possible, with dark, gipsy-like features, and sulky, morose manners.

I took them out, as a rule, alternately, and found that they were alike in only two respects—their extraordinary skill as trackers, and their entire disinclination to go hunting in the direction of the Troldpiggene. At first we found enough to do in the country easily reached from the hut, but early in the morning of the last day of the season Erik came on a trail such as neither he nor I had ever seen before, and after following at our best speed for an hour, we were rejoiced by the sight of a magnificent beast, the famous 'stor-bock' at last! feeding slowly along nearly a mile in front. We were in a capital position for watching him, and the glass soon showed us that he carried a wonderful head, while even the naked eye could easily distinguish his pure white coat, a colour fairly common among tame herds, but very unusual in a wild deer.

The difficulties of 'rens' stalking are always great, but never was there such an exasperating brute as this to follow. He led us up corries, through passes, down scandalous precipices, and across icy streams. He stood, and walked, and trotted; he nibbled reindeer flowers and chewed shale. He lay down for an hour in

the middle of a huge flat snowfield, and he wandered deviously about a wilderness of grey stones, some tossed together like heaps of titanic road metal, some on end, with a distorted resemblance to living creatures, among which great snowy owls sat motionless as lumps of quartz, mewing like cats, and flapping away on ghostly wings when we came too near; and lemmings, grotesque little watchdogs of elf-land, yelped and bit defiantly at our intrusive feet. He did everything, in fact, that a deer can do, except letting us get within shot. But time after time he gave us cause for hope; and every hour the jagged summits of the Troldpiggene frowned higher and higher before us, and the chase grew more and more exciting.

When at last we found ourselves suddenly at the edge of a precipitous descent to a lake, its waters all ablaze with the golden glory of the setting sun, I think it would have taken more than a Troll to turn even Erik back, so eager in the pursuit had we both become.

The first glance was enough to show me that we had actually arrived at the same spot on the shores of Norre Vand that the old parson had so vividly described. Deer have a great tendency to take the same routes year after year, and it was in following one that he, like us, had found his way hither. The place was unmistakable; the huge sheer wall of the Eggen, the ravine and waterfall, and the tiny ledge threading its way diagonally downwards. And, yes, that jutting rock no doubt represented the misshapen figure of the Troll; but where on earth was our white 'stor-bock'? The next moment we saw him; the brute had gone straight down our bank of the lake, which was just practicable for so surefooted a creature as a reindeer, swum across, and was now contentedly grazing beyond that short half-mile of water, on the floor of the Cauldron, in full view of his baffled pursuers.

It was very tantalising. There was but an hour of daylight before us, and in that time we could barely circumvent the lake, and anything like stalking, to say nothing of walking that unknown tight-rope of a track, would be out of the question, so our chance was over for the year. But before turning homewards we sat down to rest a few moments and watch our quarry still placidly eating his supper across the lake.

And now a strange thing happened. The deer stopped feeding, and began to walk slowly away towards the further side of the crater, and while we both gazed at his receding form, it suddenly seemed to grow misty, fainter and fainter, and in a moment more,

under our bewildered eyes, it had faded and disappeared. Deer have a marvellous power of putting themselves out of sight, but this was something very different from their usual performance of the vanishing trick; and though I tried to persuade myself that the buck was merely hidden in some unseen hollow, I felt all the time that that misty disappearance was a fact, and not a fancy, and I could see that Erik was equally well aware of it. However, the buck was gone, and we had nothing to do but find our way back to the hut that night; the next day to Skalsbjørn; and so home to England.

That was my first experience of the Troldpiggene, and 1899 was even more disastrous, for a lot of troublesome business prevented me from getting to Norway at all, and about the end of June I received a long letter from the old parson, telling me that poor Erik had been killed while bear-hunting in those same mountains. He wrote many details, but I only learnt the whole of the facts connected with it in the following summer, when I was once more able to find my way to his cheery fireside, and from there to my old quarters on the high fjeld.

Briefly, they were as follows: Karen and Erik had, as I expected, been formally betrothed, and were much too happy in preparations for their marriage to pay any attention to the evident jealousy of Nils, who naturally became more morose than ever. About the beginning of June a calamity had come upon the district in the shape of a peculiarly ferocious 'hestebjørn' (horse-bear)—that is to say, one which is bold enough to attack horses and cattle. So many cows and sheep fell victims that the whole countryside rose in arms against the marauder, but without success, for the monster was as cunning as he was savage, and always managed to elude both trap and rifle. At length Karen's favourite cow had disappeared, and her two lovers, the accepted and rejected, had both sworn vengeance against the brute, and gone on to the Nøsdals Fjeld after him. Karen, it seems, accompanied Erik one day, still hoping that her cow might only have strayed. They had found the tracks of the horse-bear and followed them to the very head of the Troll's Path, above the lake of the Cauldron.

Either Erik's previous view of the place or his fierce anger towards the bear had rendered him proof against superstition, for he determined to go down the path and search for the brute in the crater itself. The girl at first tried to dissuade him, and, finding that useless, declared she would go with him; but he would not give way on either point, so, finally, she posted herself on the

opposite side of the lake, where she could watch her lover's perilous descent.

It must have been less difficult than was expected, for she said he went downwards quite quickly and apparently without hesitation, except at one or two places, until he reached the break in the path where the stream from the ravine takes its headlong leap into mid-air. Just then something moving near the head of the gully far above caught her eye, and she distinctly saw an unearthly-looking shaggy monster in the act of tilting a huge slab of rock over the brink. The next moment the mass fell clattering down the slope, and with a crash and roar an avalanche of mingled snow and rocks swept the ravine from top to bottom, and hurled Erik's battered form into the lake below.

Karen had struggled home almost out of her mind with grief and terror, and the same night her rejected lover had also arrived, badly mauled in an encounter he had had with the wily 'hestebjorn,' in which, however, the latter had not escaped scot-free, having carried off Nils's knife in his carcase.

I may add here that, as no more cattle had disappeared, it was confidently believed that the brute had died of his wounds.

The weather in 1900 was exceptionally good, but my new recruit, Peter, was a most incompetent substitute for poor Erik. He was useless as a hunter, and a wretched cook, but he kept us supplied with juniper for firewood, and water; and as Nils's fjeldcraft was, if possible, more perfect than before, I got along fairly well, and in the first week was lucky enough to shoot a very good buck quite near the hut.

After that, however, only small deer came our way, and we worked all the surrounding ground most conscientiously without seeing anything worth stalking. So one day we packed a week's supplies of all kinds on the pony, made a camp at the foot of the Troldpiggene, in spite of Nils's manifest reluctance, and sent Peter and the 'Hest' back to the hut to keep house until our return.

The weather remained so steadily fine that we suffered no discomfort, for our reindeer-hide sleeping-bags were impervious to the cold of the nights, and the days were gloriously long and hot. Yet our new hunting grounds proved no better than the old, and we wandered long among the rugged crags and snowfields, and through the likeliest dales for deer without seeing even a track.

On the last morning of the week we sat down to rest on the very same rock from which Erik and I had watched the white

buck two years before. I had a little pair of pocket-glasses very handy for casual spying, and was now carelessly peering into the Troll's Cauldron with them, when, in the same place where the buck had so curiously disappeared, I was aware of some sort of hazy wavering movement, and, as I gazed, a deer's form seemed to shape itself, coming towards us, at first faint and mistily indistinct of outline, but in a few seconds real and substantial; and there before us on the vivid green that carpeted the ancient crater stood a white buck, the very spit and moral of the vanished beast.

Nils had been more than usually dull and surly during our week of open-air camping, but the sight of this grand deer brought back all his keenness at once. When, however, he had studied the ground, his face fell, and he said at last: 'We cannot get him; there is no way to that place.'

'Nonsense,' I said; 'there's a first-rate way across the cliff, and we are going down it.'

He turned pale as I pointed to the Troll's Path, and said something about it not being safe, and Erik getting killed there.

'Yes,' I said, 'but that was in the spring, when the thaw was beginning. There will be no snow-slides in September,' and without more argument I started for the detour round the lake.

In less than an hour we stood at the brink of the Eggen, a thousand feet above the lake, and, looking over the edge, I was surprised to find that the path, tiny thread as it seemed from the other side, was really quite a respectably broad ledge of solid rock on which anyone with a steady head might walk without difficulty. Climbing down a few feet of rock face, I soon reached it, and had begun the slanting descent when I noticed that Nils was not following. So back I had to clamber, and found him lying on the ground with a face so drawn and haggard that I thought he must be ill. But, when he began to mutter, 'The Troll, the Troll!' and I realised that his superstitious fears were the cause of the trouble, I must confess I lost patience, and made some unpleasant remarks, which had the effect of shaming him into moving, and we were soon on our way down the rocky path.

Time was of the utmost importance, for a reindeer can travel a long way in an hour. So we hurried as fast as we dare, and in a very few minutes I was at the place where the little stream, racing down the gully from the snow-patches which line its sides, takes its mad leap into the void below. There I paused a moment with Nils at my side, to look at the queer outstanding rock which certainly had a remarkable resemblance to a leering demon squatted

at the head of the ravine. But the buck was waiting—or possibly not waiting—so I went on through the water, and up the other side of the gully. There were but a few yards of ascent before the narrow path dipped downwards as before, and I was just at the top of the rise when suddenly a whisper sounded low and clear, just at my shoulder, 'Vent lidt' ('wait a moment').

I involuntarily turned round in response before I realised that only Nils was with me, for the odd impression on my mind was that I had heard poor Erik's well-known voice, exactly as he had stopped me many a time on catching sight of deer.

Then I noticed that Nils had not moved, but was still standing by the little stream, the spray from the fall blowing back about his knees.

God forbid that I should ever see the like again! We were not six yards apart, and the man was staring straight in my direction; but not at me. Beyond all doubt it was at something half-way between us that his horror-stricken eyes and outstretched hands were directed. And the sunlight was blazing down, the sound of the stream tinkling on its stony bed was real, and there was nothing there but the bare track and that cowering wretch in the middle of it.

Suddenly he shrieked aloud 'Erik!' and on the instant came an answering roar above. I instinctively leapt backwards to the shelter of the rocky wall, and in a flash a thundering torrent of snow and ice, rocks and pebbles, and flying dust plunged headlong down the ravine and over the brink of the fall, so narrowly missing me that a whizzing fragment cut the foresight from the muzzle of my rifle, while even above all the turmoil of the avalanche Nils's death-cry was ringing in my ears. Then a silence that seemed very long; and back from the smitten waters came a crash that echoed and re-echoed from shore to shore; and I was alone, untouched, but shaking like a leaf, on that terrible Troll's Path.

It was long before I could recover my nerve sufficiently to cross the clean-swept gully and climb the steep ascent to the top, and thankful I was to turn my back to the ill-omened lake and in time to see once more the welcome light of the little hut, which the faithful but ridiculous Peter had nearly filled with juniper and water.

When, on the next evening, he and I reached Skalshjem, there was unwonted excitement in the village, and before arriving at the Praestgaard we heard that no less a person than the Amtmand was installed there, on some sort of official peregrination. This, as

it chanced, led to our knowledge of some additional facts connected with the tragic mystery of the Trolldpiggene, and probably—though this is a matter of opinion—offered a solution of some of the difficulties.

For the great man was deeply interested in the story, and by his assistance we moved mountains—or, what came to much the same thing, we got a little army of men who, with ropes and ponies, and sheer strength hauled a boat on a sledge up to those dark waters where, for nine hundred years, tradition said, no boat had floated before.

We landed at the mouth of the milky torrent which was fed by the snowy sides of the Cauldron, and thoroughly explored the basin of the ancient crater; and though we never saw the white 'stor-bock' again, we found what seemed to be a reasonable way of accounting for his weird disappearance and return.

Towards the further side of the valley we came upon a small geyser or spring of boiling water bubbling out of the ground, from which a dense cloud of steam rose into the cold air. The turf all around was perpetually moistened with the vapour, probably the ground itself was slightly warmed: hence the vivid green of the herbage, which showed so conspicuously to the other side of the lake. Just beyond the spring was a little glen at a lower level, in the soft patches of which the deep hoof-prints and dew-claws of the white buck or his brother were plain to see. My belief is that the steam (which would, of course, be invisible against the snowy background) drifted across him as he walked into the little glen. His own white hide assisted the illusion; and, presto! the vanishing trick was complete.

More than this, encouraged by the presence of the Amtmand, our army scaled the heights of the Trolldpiggene themselves, and explored most carefully the head of the ravine where wicked old Norre squatted, and whence the 'skreds' had in each case started by which the luckless hunters had been overwhelmed.

The whole of the peaks were composed of huge upright crags, with deep vertical clefts and crannies, some of them already loosened from the main body of rock, and needing but a trifling push to topple them from their base. It was not possible to trace the movements of last year, but the newly exposed surfaces left by the avalanche which I had witnessed were clear enough. And there, in a nook which the fall of the mass in front had opened to the sky, we found a rotting bear-skin, and a knife which bore the name 'Nils Nilssen, 1887.'

I heard some talk among the men of how the 'horse-bear' had come there to die with the knife still sticking in him. But there were no bones to be seen in the cranny, and when once more the old parson and I were alone together, he read the riddle differently, and, I think, more correctly. His view was that Nils had succeeded in finding and killing the bear on the same day that Erik and Karen had been following the tracks, the wounds from the brute's claws that he showed being clearly genuine. He had been bringing the skin home through the Troldpiggene when he caught sight of the lovers together across the lake, and while consumed with hatred he hid among the rocks to watch them, chance put his rival's life into his hand.

As soon as he understood that Erik was going down the Troll's Path, he hastily covered himself with the bear-skin to prevent Karen from recognising him, and chose the exact moment to tilt over the ponderous rock which, on that slippery slope, was certain to carry with it a mass of other fragments. Then, fearing that Karen might detect the part played by the skin, he had dropped it into the deep cleft where we found it, and probably his knife had fallen accidentally with it.

Well, as far as it went, the reasoning sounded clear enough, and would be satisfactory to anyone with a mere general knowledge of the facts. But it leaves unexplained that terrible scene beneath the stony figure of the Troll. Could the guilty wretch, in truth, see something invisible to me upon that fatal path? Was the voice real that chained him to the spot? And was it his own wild cry that loosed upon him the self-same death to which he had doomed his rival? To these questions the old parson attempted no answer; and unanswered they must remain while the years come and go, and the dark waters of Norre Vand whisper and ripple over the depths where Nils and Erik lie side by side, until the day when all secrets shall be known.

J. A. LEES.

At the Sign of the Ship.

'THE sweet o' the year' has come in and gone out; and how very little of its honey we wretches who live in town have tasted! That town life, where it is not actually forced on men by business, is due, I fear, to the influence of woman. Man is naturally, I think, a lonely savage, like the gorilla, not fond of society, like the gregarious baboon, and the monkey *log*, in *The Jungle Book*. The gorilla is content with his wife and offspring, lives solitary with them, and turns his boys out of the camp as soon as they can take care of themselves. That primitive man did the same thing was Mr. Darwin's opinion.

* * *

Are males not the same to-day? Do we not want a stretch of river each to himself, and are we ever so happy as when alone by ourselves and the Goddess of fishing? All day long on the Tweed and never seeing a human being, till, in the dusk, one half expected to meet the Fairy Queen, with her two white deer, stealing out of the wood, or the Black Man, the Accuser of the Brethren—such was the pleasantness of my holidays a long time ago. Now, of course, rods are as thick on Tweed as on the Regent's Canal. I thought these good days were over; but two friends tell me of Border waters, far from railways, and in moors where the bicyclist cometh not: waters where trout are still big and plentiful, and the 'peewits' fly up and scream as you pass, as they did when they were hated by the Cameronians for giving the dragoons warning of their presence. I had thought that the Border voters whom Sir Arthur Doyle is wooing had long ago killed all the trout with line, and net, and dynamite. But it appears that there are burns and waters yet unravaged, your poachers not loving long stalks through moor and morass.

* * *

It is true that a lazy old bird prefers Kennet or Lambourne, with the mayfly floating round in clouds, and the swallows pur-

suing, and the water stirred with the waves made by 'sea-shouldering whales' and big trout, and vocal with greedy gulps, as the floating fly is 'swollered.' These delightful visions and sounds I have known, in the late sweet season, but for a single hour. Then it was 'time for us to go,' and catch the train! I also spent a pleasant morning in broiling in the sun, above a hatch which commanded a shady pool, for willows and other trees girdled it all about, a place for Dian's bathing with her nymphs. Perhaps Actæon was going with his rod to such a pool, when he found the goddess and her girls splashing about, much to his annoyance. No such beings disturbed the crystal water, dark over the waving weeds, and bright over gravel patches, where big trout were cruising. But they could only be reached by floating the fly down over them, and very soon they detected every spurious imitation. Still, that kind of solitude holds the heart of happiness, and one must pack up the rod and return to the noisy hurrying place, where Woman, the sole cause of human gregariousness, is as happy as a trout in a pool. 'Without Woman what should we be?' asked the orator who gave the toast of 'The Ladies.' We should be solitaires, we should even be savages; like Hippolytus, in Euripides, who hated the ladies so bitterly, we should be sportsmen. However, 'the peety is that in this world, as God made it, ye canna hae a' thing that ye wad like,' as a philosopher says in *Catrina*. Certainly, if we were all savage hermits, we could not have cricket.

* * *

The University Match was a cause of blushes and tears to Oxford, and of severe disappointment to Cambridge. For some obscure reason, physiological or psychological, the Oxford eleven was a team of decadents, who kept going off in form, with every successive match; and Cambridge did not seem much better, on paper. Mr. Evans was not the bowler of last year; fast bowlers seem very liable to fallings-off. One took no great interest in teams which were certainly below county form, and the first day's cricket was tame, Mr. Keigwin being the most barndoor bat, of the old Notts form, that one ever saw in a University eleven. Twelve runs an hour may be *la guerre*, but it is not *magnifique*. Mr. Mann, Mr. Wilson, and Mr. Macdonell were more like University form. The fielding of Oxford was not of the best: balls were cleverly stopped, but not handled and returned well. Though Mr. Raphael was disappointing, the first day, with Mr. Evans still in, left the match open. On the second day I was not, happily,

in time to see the regular old 'rot,' as bad as in ancient years, when Messrs. Steele and Studd were the Cambridge bowlers. Last year Mr. Macdonell bowled as well as this year, but was stopped by illness, a very lucky thing for Oxford. This year he frightened and puzzled Oxford, as he began by doing in 1903, and the collapse of everybody but Mr. Evans was humorous, to Light Blue observers. The lovely thing in the match was the almost impossible yet exquisitely graceful left-handed catch by which Mr. Macdonell disposed of Mr. Awdry, who did good service in both innings. The second innings of Cambridge produced Mr. Marsh's record score, 172 not out, most creditable to a batsman of advanced years—they do say, twenty-nine. But though Mr. von Ernsthauseen kept a good length, and Mr. Martin struggled manfully, Oxford bowling was not of the very best, and had little variety. Personally, I pined to see somebody try lobbs. If Cambridge had declared sooner they would probably have won, but they sacrificed time to Mr. Marsh's record. The showers ought to have warned them to hurry matters. The delays caused by the showers still left Oxford with a very poor chance for a draw, especially as a 'rot' began, three central wickets tumbling down for sixteen, and the pitch favouring Mr. Macdonell. But Mr. Evans again rose superior to moral and material circumstances: fortune played tricks with the Cambridge mid-off, and with Mr. Evans not out for eighty-six, and Mr. Bird proving of good omen, the match, which seemed in the pocket of Cambridge, was a most unexpected draw. There really is not much to choose between the Elevens, except for the wicket-keeping of Mr. Payne and the bowling of Mr. Macdonell, on one side, and the batting of Mr. Evans, certainly the best in both teams, on the other.

* * *

The cruel necessity of 'going to press' compels me to falter forth my comments on the Gentlemen *v.* Players before the match is finished, though finished it is! The accident by which the last choice of the Players, King, nearly proved their salvation, passing the century in each innings, is a chance that repeats itself. Mr. G. O. Smith and Lord George Scott, last choices of Oxford in other years, also made centuries and won the matches for their side. A writer in *Punch*, I am sure, must have wished that Gaukrodger, rather than King, had made himself illustrious with the almost intolerable splendour of two centuries. Braund, who failed as a bat, bowled as well as usual, but with much more than usual success,

the Gentlemen of England falling like the gentlemen of France at Agincourt. 'Twas an ill day for 'gentrice,' the plebeians were too manifestly their masters. On the other hand, but for the aid of literature, in the form of Mr. Hesketh-Prichard, where would the gentry have been when the Players came to bat? A novelist of distinction, brilliantly unaffected, an explorer who only just failed to 'bring back the ashes' of the Mylodon of Patagonia, Mr. Hesketh-Prichard proved the best of amateur fast bowlers. With a bleeding heart (for the brave are always gentle) he battered the Players about the fingers and ribs, and caused them to give catches which were very cleverly held in the slips. Knight's accident was particularly to be regretted, but King, the invincible, dealt royally even with Mr. Hesketh-Prichard. The batting of Rhodes, too, was excellent, and is becoming the rival of his bowling. On the whole, as I write, the Gentlemen cannot possibly win; but, lo, they *have* won, thanks to K. S. Ranjitsinhji, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Jones, and other braves beyond all hope. It was a splendid recovery of form.

* * *

A lady sends from Northumberland the following fragment of a ballad, never previously published, to my knowledge. It is clearly English; no Scottish balladist would have spoken of Prince Charles as 'the Young Pretender.' That Miss Cameron was the Prince's mistress the English believed; but nothing was heard of this rumour in Scotland, where the heroine attracted but little attention.

* * *

'Oh Jenny Cameron's a bonny lass,
And, oh, but she is fair;
And she's the Young Pretender's lass,
And she curls and buckles his hair.

'And when they cam to Culloden field,
And she saw them fighting there,
She clasped her hands, and cried, "Alas!
There'll be nae mair curling the hair!"'

* * *

Messrs. Spencer and Gillen's new book, *The Northern Races of Central Australia* (Macmillans), is worthy of its predecessor. Perhaps

there are no such elaborate and interesting records of the customs (beyond all belief disgusting) of savage tribes. Young tribesboys must long for the advent of missionaries, which will not be quite so welcome to Messrs. Spencer and Gillen. The missionaries may not make good Christians of the tribes, but they will, if they succeed, preserve lads and lasses from most filthy and cruel rites, highly interesting to science. In these wildernesses, innocent of gold and other coveted produce of the soil, white traders will not settle, whisky will not be introduced, even if converted the savages will not go to the deuce, and they will be saved from many monstrous abominations.

* * *

One has seldom read a more amusing book than Father Gerard's *The Old Riddle and the Newest Answer*.¹ The oldest riddle is the question 'How did the Universe come here, and become what it is?' The answers are those of Mr. Darwin and Professor Haeckel. For years and years Darwinism excited people immensely—*The Origin of Species* sold like a novel of middling success. Now, I fear, a *blasé* generation does not care much whether Mr. Darwin was correct in his really ingenious surmises, or wrong. Professor Haeckel, in *The Riddle of the Universe*, at sixpence, goes a great deal farther, and is much more cocksure than Mr. Darwin or Mr. Huxley, but fails to satisfy Father Gerard. That learned man looks at the logic of the distinguished German, and—'I speak as a fool'—he does appear to pick holes in it.

* * *

The professor is of the mind of the humbug in Goldsmith, who said, in all the Greek he knew, that 'the universe is without beginning and without an end.' He really reminds one of the ancient philosophers before Socrates. Matter (whatever that may be) and ether (if we only knew what that is) 'are endowed with sensation and will.' This is like the 'animism' of savage philosophy, the professor attributing to ether and matter the qualities of which he is conscious within himself, though 'naturally in the lowest grade.' The stars were living things in ancient Greek and modern Australian black fellows' philosophy. Professor Haeckel's is one of two practicable guesses, the other is that of Virgil and Anaxagoras, *mens agitat molem*—'mind directs the universe.' 'We don't seem to be getting much forrarder,' and perhaps 'the oldest problem'

¹ Longmans,

is not soluble by human acuteness, though we must applaud those who 'never say die,' but pluckily cleave to the puzzle.

* * *

Like Empedocles, Professor Haeckel believes in "*Epis* and "*Epws*—Love and Discord—as causes of all things. 'They experience an inclination for condensation, a dislike of strain; they strive after the one and struggle against the other.' 'The whole creation groaneth and travaileth together till now,' it is very true, but Empedocles and Professor Haeckel express themselves in terms purely mythological, and the German's myth is not even original. We learned all that in Ritter and Preller. 'Movement is as innate and original a property of substances as sensation.' All this may be so, but why? 'Evolution,' exclaims the Principal of Ruskin Hall, 'from a speck of jelly has developed such living forms as Herbert Spencer and Charles Darwin.' But what is the jelly, and who is the cook? The cook is Evolution, a mythological being, 'some sort of entity at the back of the world,' says Father Gerard. He urges that Mr. Huxley would not hear of this kind of mythology, and rebuked Canon Liddon for talking it in a sermon. 'Law,' said Huxley, 'law of nature,' is not 'a being endowed with certain powers,' and he denounces 'the wonderful fallacy that the laws of nature are agents, instead of being, as they are, a mere record of experience.' 'To speak of the Law of Evolution as causing things to be evolved,' says Father Gerard, 'is like saying that the law of growth makes things grow,' or that poppies are soporific because they 'have a soporific quality.' Mr. Huxley remarked that he 'had nothing to say to any Philosophy of Evolution,' so I presume that he did not proclaim the universe to be a mass of sensations, likes, and dislikes.

* * *

Anybody who wants a concrete example of Darwinian difficulties may read Father Gerard's criticism of the various scientific genealogies of the horse. They are unworthy of the cosmic stud-book: nor do I believe Suetonius when he says that Julius Cæsar rode a charger which had toes! Suetonius does not say that this horse could climb trees; he would let nobody but Julius Cæsar mount him. He was of the same fairy breed as Claverhouse's charger that turned a hare on the slopes of Carfrae. The remains of Cæsar's horse have not been discovered: the General probably had the hoofs converted into inkstands. As to older fossils, Father

Gerard objects 'that we never find evidence of one species gradually shading off into another,' and the fossils belong to different genera, without intermediate forms. Professor Haeckel may reply that the devil, an enemy of scientific truth, has destroyed the intermediate forms, always and everywhere, to bother Darwinians, and keep mankind in the thralls of priestcraft. But the professor has, in fact, quite another explanation of the missingness of missing links, an explanation of which Mr. Huxley wrote, 'I confess this is wholly incredible to me.' Mr. Huxley's own varying ancestors of the horse 'are almost entirely American animals,' though we ought not to be prejudiced against them as if they came out of Barnum's collection. On the other hand, in Europe the horse has been traced back to quite another beast, not to the American *Eohippus*, which was about the size of the fox.

* * *

Five scientific pedigrees of the horse are before the public. I give them at full length for the consideration of the racing and

<i>Huxley</i>	<i>British Museum Case</i>	<i>Mivart</i>	<i>Lydekker</i>	<i>American Museum</i>
<i>Equus</i> <i>Pliohippus</i> <i>Protohippus</i>	<i>Equus</i> <i>Hipparion</i>	<i>Equus</i> <i>Hipparion</i> <i>Protohippus</i> <i>Anchitherium</i> <i>Pachynolophus</i>	<i>Equus</i> <i>Hipparion</i> <i>Protohippus</i> <i>Anchitherium</i> { <i>Anchilophus</i> <i>(form allied to)</i>	<i>Equus</i> <i>Hipparion</i> <i>Hypochippus</i> <i>Merychippus</i> { <i>Mesohippus</i> <i>(2 species)</i> <i>Ephippus</i> <i>Protorhippus (sic)</i> <i>Eohippus</i> <i>An undiscovered ancestor</i> <i>(Hippops)</i>
{ <i>Miohippus</i> <i>Anchitherium</i> <i>Mesohippus</i> <i>Orohippus</i> <i>Eohippus</i>	<i>Anchitherium</i> <i>Protohippus</i> { <i>Mesohippus</i> <i>(2 species)</i> <i>Hyracotherium</i>	<i>Phenacodus</i>	{ <i>Hyracotherium</i> <i>Systemodon</i>	

hunting public. *Hipparion*, we see, was scratched by Mr. Huxley 'as not being in the direct line of descent'; he is admitted by the other genealogists, as sire of *Protohippus*. The doubtfulness of the whole system is candidly exposed by Father Gerard, and only little bits of some of these ancestral horses are left. *Hippops* was 'probably not larger than a rabbit, perhaps much smaller,' about the size of a rat, a steed for Oberon. 'While the American pedigree must have been entirely different from the European, it terminates equally in both continents with the genus *Equus*,' which sounds unlikely. It is still more unsettling to faith that in Professor Haeckel's pedigree of man, according to M. de Quatrefages, 'not one of the creatures exhibited has ever been seen, either living or fossil.' 'Precisely that evidence must be supposed always to have perished which the Evolution theory imperatively requires,' and

this does look as if the Enemy had destroyed it. No doubt we shall be told that all Father Gerard's arguments have been refuted hundreds of times, but one would like to see the process performed again, in public. At present, to a lay reader of Father Gerard, it seems that the Darwinian theory is not an absolutely safe thing, and that Professor Haeckel's is an explanatory myth of a very old-fashioned description. Now, as on many another occasion, we miss Mr. Grant Allen, who would have met Father Gerard in the gate, for I think that Science must have a reply to the learned Jesuit, and Mr. Allen could have made it intelligible to the popular mind. My own belief was shaken by Mr. Darwin's theory of the origin of the cuckoo; it was too thin.

* * *

The Haeckelian doctrines, though published at sixpence, by the 'Rationalist Press' (I think), are too obviously not rational. They were made in Germany, and I hope that the British capitalist who is ready to offer 'sixpence for your thoughts' will prefer to patronise British industries. Try Messrs. Huxley and Darwin's old-established firm in evolutionary ideas, and avoid foreign spurious imitations offered under the untradesmanlike pretence, 'The Same Concern.' If any inconvenient results are experienced, ask for our 'Jesuit's Bark'—Father Gerard's reply. Having no *locus standi* as a physicist or naturalist, or chemist, or biologist, being a mere student of mythology, I can look impartially at 'the fairy tales of science,' as the poet styles them with admirable justice. *Bien pensants* people of my acquaintance say that Haeckel, at sixpence, 'does a great deal of harm.' I do not believe it; as long as the student *thinks* about the German ideas offered in return for his tanner, no harm can be done. To stimulate thought, in a world too much given over to *Snip, Cheek, Spicy Pars*, and that kind of trash, is to benefit mankind; so by all means destroy your eyesight with a sixpenny Haeckel in the Metropolitan Railway.

* * *

According to Father Gerard, the universe is becoming bankrupt, drawing on a dwindling balance, for 'the stock of energy available for the work of the universe is growing less every day,' being radiated into space, in the form of heat, which can never be recaptured, and is only a kind of unaccepted demand for renewal. 'It is lost for ever as far as we are concerned,' says Professor Tyndall. Therefore Sir William Crookes (whom I mention with the deepest

respect) guesses, or would guess if he might, 'that the heat radiations propagated outwards . . . by some process of nature unknown to us, are transformed at the confines of the universe into the primary—the essential—motion of chemical atoms, which, the instant they are formed, gravitate inwards, and thus restore to the universe the energy which would be lost to it through radiant heat.'

* * *

Here we are again in the full tide of mythology. Lucretius thought that the universe had 'confines,' 'the flaming walls of the world,' *flammantia moenia mundi*. This is literature, and very good literature—poetry, not science; for how does Sir William know that the universe has any confines? They cannot be spotted by the telescope, and they are not to be conceived by the fancy. We might as well guess that, in a club-maker's shop half a mile beyond Hecky Burn (and that is 'a mile ayont' a place unmentionable), lost golf-balls are made up again and gravitate back to the links. Fairy-tales, myths, *märchen* of the civilised fancy are all these scientific hypotheses, as far as they have gone; of course it does not follow that future generations may not better understand 'The Old Riddle.' Just at present you cannot really hope to buy the answer for sixpence at any railway bookstall, but you can veritably get *The Prisoner of Zenda* for the same coin.

ANDREW LANG.

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